WITH THE 112th IN FRANCE

A DOUGHBOY'S STORY
OF THE WAR

BY

JAMES A. MURRIN

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WITH THE 112TH IN FRANCE

COLONEL GEORGE C. RICKARDS

Beloved Commander of the 112th Infantry at Camp Hancock and throughout all the trying days on the battlefront in France

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A DOUGHBOY'S STORY OF THE WAR

BY

JAMES A. MURRIN

THIRTY-TWO ILLUSTRATIONS

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A GREETING FROM THE 112TH'S VETERAN COMMANDER.

To the Officers and Men of the 112th Infantry, U. S. Army:

I assure you that I esteem it a very great honor and the privilege of a lifetime to thus subscribe to the patriotism and loyalty of the men who made up the rank and file of the 112th U. S. Infantry; who, by their faithful performance of duty, made possible the accomplishment of meeting every demand to which it was called; who, regardless of conditions, by their solemn joyfulness kept alive the spirit of comradeship and determination and carried fear to the heart of the foe; and who, by their fidelity to their Commanding Officer, brought honor and recognition to the organization.

None of these things can ever be understood, much less appreciated, by any but one who has commanded in times such as we have experienced, and so it is with the deepest sense of comradeship and love I acknowledge to the living of my comrades an undying gratitude, and to those who gave up their lives in the great cause, a solemn and holy reverence, firm in the belief that their spirit has found that refuge sought by all men; and with the hope that the past has but strengthened us, the living, in the characteristics of clean manhood and citizenship, to the end that when the last taps have sounded for

us, we shall have reaped the same reward—honor among our fellow-men and an everlasting life.

I also wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge our indebtedness to Corporal Murrin for the preservation of manuscripts, accounts of events and official records. He has compiled them, together with his own writings done while on the field, which makes them both of historical value and intense interest to every member of the 112th Infantry and their friends.

I congratulate my comrades of the Regiment that it is possible for them to have this record and commend Corporal Murrin for his worthy and successful effort.

I have the honor to be

Your comrade,

GEO. C. RICKARDS.

OIL CITY, PA.
June 6, 1919

INTRODUCTION TO A DOUGHBOY'S STORY

THROUGH and through this is a doughboy's story.

It is not a compilation of official documents, written with a view to meeting all the requirements of a stereotyped report. The effort has been directed toward telling in a human way those human incidents which made up part of the life of hiking, fighting and eating (as time and rolling kitchens permitted) during a strenuous four months' service on the battle-line in France.

Perhaps the story of the 112th Infantry, 28th Division, is no more remarkable in many respects than the record of many other infantry regiments at the front. No claim is made that it had better fighters, that it excelled in one specialty or in staying qualities; yet it did possess all those characteristics which go toward making up a real American regiment, fighting fit and ready to fight; that indomitable persistence to plunge ahead which played such a great part in driving the Hun line back to its homeland.

The purpose of this little volume—in itself a summary of doughboy incidents, front-line actions and shell-dodging—is merely to record for all time the fact that the 112th Infantry, as part of the Keystone Division and of the great American army in France, played its part in the field—played it in such a becoming belligerent

fashion as to win numerous commendations from Division, Corps and Army commanders.

Its men were no different from thousands of others; yet those who claimed allegiance to the 112th, who trained with it at Camp Hancock and who fought with it from the Marne to the Vesle, through the Argonne and on the Thiaucourt sector, believe it to be worthy of a place in history. That is but natural; the men of any other regiment of many another division have the same feeling; it is such a spirit, such superb confidence and such splendid conduct when the real test comes that made the American army the invincible steam-roller it proved itself to be during that stirring summer and memorable fall of 1918.

The mention of persons, of places, of one company or another must not be taken as reflecting at all on those that are omitted. After all, place names mean but little; the names of those who fought and died are cherished by the loved ones left to mourn their loss, while the names of those who fought and lived are to-day revered in those homes to which they have returned, to receive that glorious welcome which an appreciative nation has given to all its A. E. F. veterans.

Being a doughboy's story, mistakes are within the range of possibility. The doughboy is not infallible; and " this man's army " is not without fault; and yet the doughboy has been one of the big factors in making the army " over there " worth-while. The letters, anecdotes and the jottings-in-general that go to make up this little

volume show the hopeful spirit of the man under fire, his boyish tendencies, his genial good nature in spite of innumerable difficulties and discouragements.

Under such a leader of men as Colonel George C. Rickards, who at fifty-eight led the 112th into action along the Vesle, they had a regimental commander in whom they had the firmest confidence at all times; whose every act was an inspiration, and who was appreciative of buck private, non-com and officer, all according to the degree of his efficiency in playing the game. Colonel Rickards, with his two-score years of military experience, was among the oldest National Guard officers to see front-line action, and yet he was young in spite of his years.

The story of the 112th Infantry is nothing more than the complete narrative of Colonel Rickards and his family of fighting doughboys. Under shellfire, marching through a downpour of rain, enduring the same conditions as his men, the commanding officer of the 112th Infantry earned for himself the esteem and love of men whose fighting abilities were tested in the crucible of Jerry's hell-fire. Few commanders have been so solicitous for the welfare of the man in the ranks, few have been able to combine discipline and friendship for the soldier so admirably—in other words, few officers have proved so able as gentlemen and soldiers to command as this man who saw the whole war game through with the 112th Infantry Regiment in France.

This is not a one-man story. If the personal pro-

noun is used at times, it is Mr. Doughboy speaking—not the author. The author himself was a doughboy throughout the whole " show "; he shouldered a rifle and carried " ammo "; in addition, he managed to swing a Corona in one hand until the Argonne decreed that the little machine was beyond service. In his small way he has played an average part; as a cub war correspondent when the armistice was signed he recorded the day-to-day events of an existence that seemed to run on a humdrum basis after four months of unending activity and excitement.

Now that the war is over, it seems altogether fitting that a few of the stories, letters and notes on what the regiment experienced during its tour of duty in the A. E. F. should be given a permanent form; for memory plays many tricks and is liable to brush away some of those dates on which the 112th helped make American history in the republic " over there."

Sailing from New York on May 7, 1918, landing in France nine days later, at the front on July 4th and under shellfire for all of but fourteen days until the signing of the armistice November 11, 1918, the 112th Infantry had a whirlwind record of activity hard to approach. In a twinkling, the 28th Division passed from a " green " into the " veteran " class, and sharing in these honors was the regiment about whose life on the battle-front this volume essays to say something worth-while.

No tribute to the 112th could be more expressive than the cryptic statement that it played the game every foot

of the way; it did not recognize the impossible as unsurmountable; it converted a dead sector into something of life—all to the disgust of a retreating and beaten foe.

The man at home, the soldiers in American camps, the S. O. S. in France, the artillery, the coöperation of other units, and the living spirit of a great cause itself all helped make the accomplishments of the infantry possible; and the 112th was one of those regiments which made good from the start, and never quit until the war was declared over.

To those men, living and dead, who were its members, to its officers and to its beloved Colonel, this book is affectionately dedicated. It is written in the hope that it may serve as a reminder of the brighter side of those days in France, to which each doughboy hopes he has said adieu for all time.

JAMES A. MURRIN.

FRANKLIN, PA.
July 1, 1919

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PART ONE

IN SOUTHERN SANDS

GETTING READY AT CAMP HANCOCK, AUGUSTA, GA.,
FOR THE GREAT WAR GAME OVERSEAS

PERIOD FROM SEPTEMBER 10, 1917, TO MAY 7, 1918

WITH THE 112th IN FRANCE

CHAPTER I

THE HISTORY OF TWO REGIMENTS

Old 16th Pennsylvania Infantry First War Strength Regiment in the Country—8th and 16th Merged Into the 112th Early in October—Days of Training in Southland Show Up Well.

When the order came on July 15, 1917, for the National Guard to mobilize, in response to President Wilson's call, there were few among the Pennsylvania troops who would confess even now that they had an inkling of what was in store for them, either in the days, weeks or months to follow.

The call had been expected any week, from the time America entered the World War on April 6th of that year until the word actually came for a gathering of the forces, a mustering of strength and the hurrying up of details that would clear the way for action and other orders.

And when this news came it found the old 16th Pennsylvania Infantry Regiment, with its headquarters at Oil City, the first war strength National Guard Regiment in the whole United States. Each company of the Regiment had more than the requisite 150 men, and one unit had more than 190. When entraining orders arrived and the mobilized units started for Camp Hancock, the 16th

pulled out for the Southland with 2001 enlisted men and 52 officers.

While the entire 16th was arriving at Camp Hancock, Augusta, Georgia, on the night of September 10th, the old 8th Regiment, with Headquarters at Harrisburg, was entraining for the same destination. It was not until more than five weeks afterward, when the reorganization of the Pennsylvania National Guard was effected along the War Department lines, that it was determined that the 8th and the 16th should share honors in becoming the greater 112th Infantry Regiment—the men from the Oil Region and those from the broad central valleys of the Keystone State. The 8th Regiment arrived in camp on September 12th.

Apropos of this joining of forces, it might be well to give a brief review of the history of each of these well-known Pennsylvania Guard Regiments. The old 16th Pennsylvania Infantry had been organized in 1878, with General John A. Wiley, a veteran of the Civil War, as its first Colonel. Since that time there were in command: General John A. Wiley, from December 3, 1878, to January 25, 1887; General Willis J. Hulings, March 3, 1887, to August 28, 1907, and Colonel George C. Rickards, from September 9, 1907, to the time of the reorganization at Camp Hancock, where he was retained as Colonel of the 112th Infantry, to serve with becoming credit throughout America's participation in the great World War.

The 16th participated in the Spanish-American War,

its theatre of operations being in Porto Rico, where it took part in several engagements. In one, the battle of Coamo, several of its officers conducted themselves so admirably under fire as to win commendation in official dispatches. It was during the Porto Rican campaign that Colonel Hulings was promoted to Brigadier-General and Colonel Rickards to Colonel in command of the Regiment; at the close of the war, however, both officers resumed their former commands as Colonel and Lt. Colonel, respectively, of the Regiment. It was at this time that five companies of the old 15th Infantry became a part of the 16th.

When the Regiment answered the President's July 15th call for mobilization, its companies were distributed as follows:

Headquarters, Supply and D Companies at Oil City; Company A at Corry; Company B at Meadville; Machine Gun and C Companies and Sanitary Detachment at Bradford; Company E at Kane; Company F at Franklin; Company G at Erie; Company H at Ridgway; Company I at Warren; Company K at Kittanning; Company L at Butler; and Company M at Grove City.

Both the 16th and 8th Regiments saw service on the Mexican border from July 3, 1916, until the early part of the following year, and both, too, participated in the inaugural ceremonies at Washington in March, 1917. The 8th Regiment drew its personnel from what is known as the Harrisburg district, that city itself provid-

ing the Headquarters, Machine Gun, Supply and D and I Companies. The other units of the 8th Regiment came from York, Chambersburg, Bedford, Carlisle, Huntingdon, Pottsville, Mahanoy City and Tamaqua. It was truly representative of the central part of the Keystone State.

It came into the new 112th Regiment with the record of having taken part in the inaugural ceremonies at Washington of nine Presidents, from Garfield to Wilson; in the inaugural ceremonies of ten Governors of Pennsylvania, from Governor Hartranft in 1876 to Governor John K. Tener in 1911. In fact, from the time of its organization in 1874 until it was called to the service again in 1917, it had played a representative and prominent rôle in many state and national ceremonies, not omitting mention of participation in the Centennial Parade in Philadelphia in 1876, and the great Jubilee Parade in the same city at the close of the war with Spain.

As an organization to preserve order within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania it served well in the industrial troubles and strikers' conflicts in various parts of the state, particularly during the railroad riots of 1876 at Pittsburgh; in 1875 at Shamokin, during the "Molly Maguire" riots; in 1876 at Mahanoy City, during the miners' disturbance there; at Homestead, upon the occasion of the great steel strike of 1892; at Hazleton, during the coal strike of 1897; and the Shenandoah anthracite coal strikes in 1900 and 1902.

The regiment was organized in 1874 with the election of John P. S. Gobin, of Lebanon, as Colonel. During the Spanish-American War he was given the rank of Brigadier-General and placed in command of the 8th Pennsylvania U. S. Volunteers (the 8th Pennsylvania National Guard), the 12th U. S. Volunteer Infantry, and the 3d Virginia U. S. Volunteer Infantry at Camp Alger, Virginia, and later at Camp Meade, Middletown, Pa. The 12th Pennsylvania and the 3d Virginia Volunteers were mustered out of service at the close of the war, but the 8th Pennsylvania Infantry was retained; it is a coincidence that during the winter of 1898 it was sent to Augusta, Ga., and was camped on part of the same ground which was designated by the War Department in 1917 as Camp Hancock. In March, 1899, the 8th was mustered out of Federal service.

Like the 16th Regiment, the old 8th boasted of a splendid personnel of officers, men of high standing in their respective communities, soldiers of long experience in the military game, and who, during their term of service, had made a lasting impression and had done much to improve the morale in general. As Colonels of the old 8th, the following in the order named served in that capacity: John P. S. Gobin, who later became Lieutenant-Governor; Frank J. Magee, Theodore F. Hoffman, Joseph B. Hutchinson and Maurice E. Finney. The last Lieutenant-Colonel of the old 8th was Frank E. Ziegler, a prominent lawyer of Harrisburg, who died in February, 1918, from the effects of a fall

from his mount at Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas.

This, in brief, is the story of the two Pennsylvania regiments that were designated to become the 112th Infantry. Up until a few days prior to the actual transfer of personnel, accomplished on October 17, 1917, Camp Hancock was rife with rumors and reports. Originally, the reorganization plans called for a merger of the old 18th (or Pittsburgh) Regiment with the 16th; the officers of that organization, bringing influence to bear, took their cause to Washington and after a battle lasting four or five days won their point.

The reorganization plan provided for 250 men and six officers per company, and General Order No. 22, Headquarters 28th Division, dated October 11, 1917, wiped out all old lines. Thereafter the old 16th became known as the 112th; six days later, with a blistering sun beating down on Camp Hancock sands and making things warm, the boys of the old 8th tramped into the 112th area along Pennsylvania avenue, deposited barracks bags and equipment at the head of the company streets, and said " Howdy."

Then and there the central and northwestern Keystoners joined hands in the great game which they were to help bring to such a successful conclusion a little more than twelve months later.

The first disappointments in the hearts of the old 8th youngsters were wiped out in the comradeship of the few days following; strangers became fast friends, let-

tered companies of the old National Guard regiments became merged, for the most part, into the same letter under the 112th Infantry. So by November 1st the average person looking at the regiment from the casual viewpoint would hardly believe anything other than that these companies of 250 and more men each had been drilling together for weeks or even months instead of a few days. This rapid development of efficiency and the elimination of lost motion soon put Camp Hancock on the map as a mobilization center with a record; and when it came to the test under fire it put the 112th Infantry and the whole 28th Divsion into the veteran fighting aggregation at one bound.

The 112th Infantry spent nearly eight months in southern sands, from the arrival of the 16th and 8th Regiment units during the week of September 10th, until the departure for the embarkation camp on April 30th and May 1st of 1918. The record of activities at Camp Hancock was one round of strenuous preparation followed by another—bayonet drills, bomb-throwing, squads "east and west," parades, reviews, specialist classes, hikes by day and by night, construction of trenches, and, in fact, every bit of army activity that would prepare the man in khaki for strenuous days "over there." French and British instructors, sent by the Allies from the battle-zone of Flanders and France, assisted the division personnel in the direction of bayonet, bombing and other practices. The soldier in the ranks began realizing as soon as he arrived at camp that

this war game wasn't all camouflage, and accordingly jumped into it with both feet and kept things in motion. Had the call come for overseas service in November or December, 1917, as many had anticipated, it would have found the 112th Infantry and all other units of the division ready and willing to go—most of all, ably prepared to combat the difficulties and hardships of the battle-field.

But politics, the War Department's changing plans, and perhaps other incidents contributed to a longer stay in the Southland, so spring arrived and Easter came before the movement to Camp Upton actually got under way.

Crowded into the nearly eight months in which the 112th had been at Camp Hancock there were many incidents and much of real pleasure in the day-to-day routine of the army game. The few chapters that follow form an outline of a three-season stay in one of the most splendid mobilization camps of the South, one which held the good health record for many weeks at a time.

Life at Camp Hancock was a fitting prelude and a carefully prepared introduction to the testing fire of the Marne, the Vesle, and those days of exhaustion in the advance through the Argonne. These things the doughboy little dreamed of as he went through a strenuous day's drill and then enjoyed an evening pass to Augusta; but they were privileges greatly cherished in memory when the battle-front was reached.

CHAPTER II

PARADES AND HIKES AT CAMP HANCOCK

Arrival and First Night in Camp, September 10, 1917—First Parade of War Strength Regiment on October 15th—Brigade March Through Augusta Four Days Later—Mutual Admiration in Augusta.

"MIGHTY glad to see you fellows," called one of the many civilians who waved to the boys in the troop train as it crossed Greene Street. "We're happy to have all you Pennsylvanians here."

That was the welcome Augusta accorded to the first troop trains of the old 16th Regiment as they crossed the Savannah River at sundown and found their way through the yards to the Wheless siding that memorable night of September 10, 1917. Doughboys poked their heads from every window and cheered; the Southland echoed the enthusiasm, and even before the long trains reached Wheless, and the soldiers piled off in the dark, it was indicated that the people of Augusta and the boys from the old Keystone State were to become fast friends.

A thousand miles away from home, it seemed we were a whole continent away that first night; and yet amid the confusion, piles of baggage and the noise of speeding motor trucks, youngsters of the old 16th flopped on the ground or took some of the cots stored in the frame mess-halls and slept until a light rain at 6 the next morning aroused them from their slumber. Few

will forget the impressions of that first night, the mammoth size of the camp, the long hike from the train to the area on Pennsylvania Avenue.

It looked like a big circus, as the motor trucks, piled high with baggage, boxes and tentage from the trains, sped up the roads, whizzed around corners and ran into some dark field that was to become a company street. The Bradford boys of Company C, who had been at Hancock several weeks ahead of the others, extended a warm welcome to the other companies, and evinced especial interest in the arrival of the other Bradford units—the Machine Gun Company and the Sanitary Detachment.

One after another, the big Packard trucks, carrying several tons each of baggage, with usually a half dozen soldiers on top, rolled into the 16th area at intervals of about fifteen seconds. As soon as one was unloaded, it sped back to the train.

It was a starlit night, but dark as only an army camp without electric lights can be. Here and there a lantern flickered, and the only bright light was afforded when one of the big Packard trucks moved up and whizzed away.

Stories that Georgia had plenty of warmth were almost wholly discredited the first night. A cool breeze that whistled through the trees fringing the camp made the night chilly. Even those fortunate enough to possess two blankets brought their ponchos into use. By 4 in the morning it was cold enough to make the soundest

START OF 7-MILE HIKE FROM CAMP HANCOCK

Beginning of the series of long marches over Georgia roads. Note the cotton uniforms. Trees in background were removed a month after photo was taken

sleeper sit up and take notice. Then a light rain two hours later brought every youngster tumbling out.

There was no delay in the breakfast, for even amid the confusion of the first night in camp, mess sergeants had seen to it that the stoves were set up. Food seldom tasted half so good as it did then. Potatoes, bacon, corn-flakes, coffee, bread with jam—that was the standard menu, with a few minor variations. It was eaten with a relish that became part of the history of Southern Sands.

By 9 that morning the real work of getting the camp established was under way; tents were erected in rapid-fire order, and three hours later many of the small trees behind company mess shacks along the newly-made Pennsylvania Avenue had been removed and two-thirds of all the pyramidal tents necessary to house the old 16th had been erected. By nightfall the camp, to use the enlisted man's expression, was in "apple-pie order." The following day, September 12th, the 8th Regiment arrived in another section of Camp Hancock, and went through practically the same process.

Meanwhile, the 16th boys were hard at the task of clearing the sandy drill field of brush and stumps, a task in which a large number made their first acquaintance with poison oak; arms, hands and legs and, in some cases, faces, were swollen, and the Medical Detachment got busy right from the start in caring for the unfortunates. By Saturday evening, September 15th, the drill field between Pennsylvania Avenue and the Wrightsboro

Road had been cleared of all stumps, and the whole stage set for the first drills on the following Monday.

Companies were at the same time making things comfortable for the men as circumstances would permit. Officers were seeing to it that board floors were purchased for their own tents and for those of the enlisted men, and Augusta planing mills had more orders than they could satisfactorily fill for the next three weeks. Simultaneously, wire details were busy making telephone and light connections, and by the latter part of September the candle had become a back number in Hancock history, and each pyramidal tent had one tungsten or Mazda lamp that made the place seem like home.

September 19th went down on record as the date of the first regimental parade, and the cub war correspondent at that time, writing to the home-town paper, had this to say:

> With all the splendor attaching to a field army in review, but on a smaller scale, every unit of the 16th Regiment this evening participated in its first formal regimental parade on the new drill ground. Colonel Rickards and his staff reviewed the soldiers after they had formed in battalions and "The Star-Spangled Banner" had been played.

The high towers that had been erected for photographic purposes provided a splendid view of the troops as they marched across the stumpless drill ground, and pictures were taken of the formation at the time.

This first parade was only a foretaste of the many

that were to follow during the stay in the Southland; thereafter one such formation a week was the average, and for a great while there were two parades. The most notable of those early-day reviews at camp was that on October 15th, the first parade of a new war strength regiment held in the United States. Thirty-seven hundred men were in line—the combined strength of the 8th and the 16th Regiments, merged two days later into the 112th.

Speaking of the spectacle at that time *The Augusta Herald* said:

With more men in line than were in the whole Second Brigade at Camp Stewart a year ago, the new 112th Regiment held what is perhaps the first parade of a war strength infantry regiment in the United States last evening.

More than 3700 men were in line. These comprised the entire strength of Colonel George C. Rickards' command, 2026 men exclusive of the officers, together with the full strength of Colonel Maurice E. Finney's command, the 8th Regiment. The two bands of the respective organizations combined.

Far out along the Wrightsboro side of the drill field, facing to the north, the 3700 troops were lined up in three separate battalions. It was a splendid sight—more men in one regiment than were in the 10th, 16th and 18th Pennsylvania Infantry Regiments combined, on border duty last fall.

On the reviewing line with Colonel Rickards were: Captain James C. Shaw, Regimental Adjutant; Major W. C. Hogan, Chaplain Willis W. Hall and officers of the Sanitary Detachment. With Colonel Finney were: Lieutenant-Colonel Frank E. Ziegler, Captain Harry H. Baker, Regimental Adjutant; Chaplain Harry N. Bassler and other officers. Participating in the parade or occupying places on the reviewing line were: Majors George B. Corbin, Lester H.

Huber and William H. Baublitz, of the 8th, as well as their battalion adjutants—Lieutenants James Painter, John Wiestling and Henry M. Gross.

Those who were on the border and recalled parades of companies having but 70 or 75 men marveled at the sight of units of 250 as they swept by, great clouds of dust from the drill field at times obscuring part of the line. Even the machine gun trucks, seldom participating in formations, had a part in the parade, and be it said in all justice to the Fords, they kept their lines straight.

On October 17th the actual transfer of the 8th Regiment personnel to the 112th area was accomplished, and after the first few days of getting straightened around and adjusting minor difficulties, it seemed that the 8th and 16th had always been one great organization.

"To-night there are cheers every now and then for the 8th Regiment boys," a grapevine special, written on moving day said.

In addition, each company was given three lusty cheers as it arrived at its new home. The regimental canteen did such a rushing business this afternoon because of the new arrivals that it had to close its doors for half an hour, something that has never happened before. The supply sergeants, mess sergeants and top sergeants are working overtime now, but within a week everything will be going smoothly, and the boys will be so well acquainted that it will seem as if they, too, were from the same section of the state (a prediction that came true). They're a clean-cut looking regiment of fellows, and they certainly have been given a warm welcome.

Banquets were held by a number of the companies to celebrate the event.

Among the other notable events of that same week were the construction of three shallow bayonet-practice

trenches on the drill field, put into use almost immediately by the bayonet classes; and the impressive parade of 8200 men through the streets of Augusta—in other words, the first parade of the new 56th Infantry Brigade.

"The greatest military parade Augusta has ever seen," was the manner in which it was described in the papers of that time. "With hundreds upon hundreds lining the streets, 8200 troops of the 56th Brigade participated in their ten-mile practice hike Friday afternoon.

The boys of the 112th, together with those of the 111th and the 109th Machine Gun Battalion, were in the line of march. It was an impressive sight. At the head of the four-mile column rode Brigadier-General Albert J. Logan, and following his staff were Colonel George C. Rickards, Lieutenant-Colonel Robert B. Gamble, Captain James C. Shaw and others of the 112th Regiment. All members of the regimental staffs were mounted, and the enlisted men of the companies carried rifles and canteens.

The route of the parade was from the drill field over the Wrightsboro Road to Highland Avenue, thence to Walton Way, to 15th Street, to Broad, then to 7th and over Greene to 13th, striking the Wrightsboro Road for home. It was 1.30 when the orders to march were given, and with the 112th Regimental Band playing away, the column swung into the road, the boys from the northwestern and central part of Pennsylvania being in the lead.

At 3 o'clock the heart of Augusta's business section was reached, and as the column swung by the Confederate monument just below 8th Street, the 112th's band struck up "Dixie," and the enormous throng of bystanders cheered lustily. It had the same effect as in Charlottesville, Va., early in September, when the boys detrained for the first time and paraded through that old-fashioned Virginia city.

Fewer than a half-dozen men of the 112th Regiment dropped out, and these cases were not ones of exhaustion. It proved that the hardening process the soldier boys are undergoing is having real

beneficial effects. More than half of the march was accomplished in regular march step, and only when the rough places along the dirt highways were encountered was the command "route-step" given. All along Broad Street the soldiers were enthusiastically cheered and greeted with the "rebel yell." Out along Walton Way many girls waved handkerchiefs and spectators applauded.

Brigadier-General William G. Price, now acting commander of the 28th Division (owing to the presence of Major-General Charles M. Clement in France), reviewed the troops from 5 to 5.40 upon their return to camp. The soldiers swung across the 112th's drill field in company formation, the prettiest sight that has been afforded in many a day, each line containing 125 men, and each company presenting two great lines each. All of the officers were pleased, and it is the consensus of opinion that this practice hike was even a greater success than the first.

Practice marches and regimental parades were just as fully a part of the military game at Camp Hancock, and just as essential to the proper training of the soldier for the more serious work abroad, as were the rough-and-tumble features of the game—the bayonet training and rushes, automatic rifle instruction, throwing of grenades, digging of trenches, trips to the rifle range. Athletics immediately took a prominent place in the program of activities; Wednesday and Saturday afternoons, as well as Sunday, were devoted to baseball games. It was a common occurrence for the soldiers to attend church services Sunday morning and to participate in a hotly contested ball game in the afternoon; but religious scruples were to some extent put aside in this preparation of the soldiers for battle.

But by no means must the fact be overlooked that

during these training days the Church and the Y. M. C. A. exercised a profound influence upon those men who realized that perhaps only a few months were to separate them from pleasures and privileges of a training camp and throw them into a battle-ridden country. So the meetings that were conducted at the Y. M. C. A., the home-like touch that prevailed in the great green building at one end of the drill field and the opportunity to worship in one's own church in the city were things that were cherished in those eventful days in Southern Sands.

Through the churches of Augusta many 112th soldier boys gained introduction to prominent Southern families; through the trips to the city the men from Pennsylvania began to feel a part of the Southland, and Augusta took the 28th Division to her heart and kept it there.

A large number of soldiers became affiliated with churches of their own denomination, and the social features that resulted and the pleasant acquaintanceships that developed went far toward making the boy in khaki, a thousand miles from his home, feel content to play the first stages of the war game in the Southland. No one will ever be able to give an approximate estimate of how much this splendid Southern influence affected the morale of the men.

The clean-cut appearance of the 28th Division soldier stamped him as a man to be trusted anywhere. Augusta, still mindful of some of the deplorable condi-

tions at camp during the Spanish-American War, was at first hesitant; then, convinced that the soldiers who came from the North in 1917 to uphold their country's cause were gentlemen through and through, lost no time in doing all within her power to make them feel at home. And through the months of training this mutual and increasing regard played a prominent though silent rôle in the successful training of the men who were later to make up the Iron Division in France.

One is not apt to forget in those formative days the brief addresses made by Brigadier-General Albert J. Logan and Colonel Rickards upon the dedication, October 29th, of the great green Y. M. C. A. building already referred to, officially known as No. 76, which was a haven of rest and comfort on many nights when the inclement or cold weather made the squad tent a desolate place.

" I am proud of all you boys," General Logan said, " for you are men who have volunteered. You came here to be trained, and it is your bounden duty to give your attention in this work, not only for your country's sake, but for your own. And remember, gentlemen, that you cannot be good soldiers unless you are good men. How better can you serve in your affection for the friends and relatives than by going home after the war and saying, ' I have been mentally, morally and physically right.' "

And Colonel Rickards' talk was quite along the same lines, equally impressive:

I presume that 90 per cent. of the men who are here to-night are men who have come here with clean characters, with upright manhood, and I believe it is as much our duty to keep these men upright

as it is to reach down and bring others up. It is my belief that those of us who do live a clean life should never hesitate to reach down and help the other fellow up.

There is another fact that I want you to drink in deeply. You have come from Christian homes, and you have been taught to pray; it has been your habit. Don't be a moral coward; don't be afraid to kneel down beside your cot at night. Keep those characteristics strong, cherish them as the greatest assets you have.

With the guiding influence of such men as these over the 56th Infantry Brigade and the 112th Infantry, respectively, it is no wonder that the welfare of the enlisted man was ably safeguarded. Soldiers are the same the world over—fun-loving, energetic, hardened to life in the open, and, withal, ready to adapt themselves quickly to any circumstance or any situation. The 28th Division at Camp Hancock, however, enjoyed the reputation of being gentlemen, as well as splendidly trained fighters. It is, therefore, not remarkable that Governor Martin Brumbaugh, on the occasion of his visit to Camp Hancock on November 9th, when the 112th Infantry passed in review before him, should remark:

"Colonel Rickards, that was the greatest review of any regiment of troops I have ever seen."

This was, indeed, a compliment to the Regimental Commander, his staff, and the 3934 men in the 112th Infantry. That Governor Brumbaugh should pay such a tribute to the organization was something that delighted everyone from Colonel to buck private. Undoubtedly, the review was the most largely attended of the many that were given at Camp Hancock up until

that date. Automobiles lined both the Wrightsboro Road and that part of the field immediately behind the reviewing line, and military police especially detailed had their hands full keeping two thousand or more spectators within bounds—a large gathering for such a camp, where parades, maneuvers and other activities were part of the day's work.

The memory of Governor Brumbaugh's review of the 112th, then at full strength and in the pink of condition, will linger long.

CHAPTER III

ONE MEMORABLE THANKSGIVING

Election Day, Circus Day, and Libery Loan Subscriptions—Rapid Progress of Special Classes—Thanksgiving and Christmas at Y. M. C. A. Hut—First Great Division Parades—Old Man Winter Arrives.

THE first two months of training at Camp Hancock, busy as they were, produced more than a mere routine of training. Ringling Brothers' circus came to Augusta late in October, and bayonet drills and trench digging halted for a whole day while the doughboy populace hit the sawdust trail to the big tent.

Then there was Liberty Loan Day, with passes of all kinds shut off for a period of forty-eight hours that the entire division might devote its energies to practical patriotism. The old 16th section of the 112th Infantry, with one company racing with another, reported a total of $112,000 at midnight on October 25th. Company L forged into the lead at the last lap, taking honors from Company F by a few thousand.

On November 5th, Frank E. Lemcke, of Franklin, designated as Special Commissioner from Pennsylvania to take the soldier vote of the 112th Infantry, arrived at Camp Hancock, and the day following was election day —and likewise a holiday. Balloting started shortly before 8 o'clock, and by noon practically all of the excitement was over. At 2 the polls were closed and results

were known at 4 o'clock. At 6 some of the figures were known in Pennsylvania towns.

Practice hikes meanwhile continued to share honors with parades and the routine trench work of the drill field. On November 8th the entire 56th Infantry Brigade took a southward route of 16.2 miles, up hills and down and through the great Phinizy cotton plantation, returning to camp late at night. Augusta papers declared this was the longest march made through Georgia by any troops since Sherman's famous march to the sea. The 112th, taking a different route from the 111th Infantry, walked the farthest; it was after 9 o'clock at night when the last units had reached camp.

Specialist schools were in blossom at Division Headquarters and vicinity at this time, training both officers and promising non-coms for the work of carrying on instruction in bombing, bayonet work, automatic rifle practice and similar duties. Captain Carl Uller, a likable young officer of the 337th French Infantry, was in charge of the division bombing classes; Lieutenant Felix G. Pernet, a fellow-countryman, of the 148th Infantry, had charge of automatic rifle instruction; wiry little Billy Armstrong, who hailed from Canada, was there with the punch when it came to boxing, and Captain Hugh R. Doane, coached by British experts, rapidly developed into the crack bayonet instructor of the Keystone Division, with Lieutenant Joseph P. Connell as an able successor.

It was Lieutenant Connell who taught the 112th

ONE OF THE ELECTION BOARDS

Doughboys had a chance to vote even though they were away from home. Seated in the picture are: Frank E. Hedley, Quinton J. McClelland, Robert E. Jones, J. Hulleck Speer, Thomas Herriman and James Clune. Standing: David Herring, Gilbert Bishop, Sherman Dunlap and Albert Harton. All were members of Co. F.

112TH BOYS AT GRENADE PRACTICE

This photo, taken at Camp Hancock early in November, 1917, shows the men hurling the dummy or concrete grenade designed by Colonel Rickards for practice use. The men demonstrated their efficiency in the art upon reaching France

Infantry the ins and outs, jabs and body blows, with the bayonet, and the enthusiasm he put into the work went far toward developing many experts. Major Charles F. Clyde, who had been to Fort Sill, superintended the automatic rifle instruction for the regiment, and Lieutenant Harry B. McCluskey was placed in charge of the 112th bombing classes, concrete forms being used in the preliminary work.

These are only a few of the sidelights. The average man in the ranks recognized there was more to do right along, but the longer he was in Camp Hancock the more he grew to feel at home. Squads put finishing touches on their tents; November's first cold waves saw the conical stoves installed, floors adjusted, sidewalls erected, and every tent put in condition for a winter's stay in the Southland.

It was just about this time that a half-Angora specimen made its appearance on the scene—"Mr. William B. Goat," designated as the official mascot of the 112th Infantry. It was a present from the little sons of Mr. and Mrs. J. McKnight Speer, of Meadville, who had a winter home six miles from Camp Hancock, and Colonel Rickards, who had scoured the surrounding country for miles for a suitable goat, was about the most delighted person in camp, outside of "William B." himself, perhaps.

With typical army weather—rain in the morning and sunshine in the afternoon—Thanksgiving arrived. Thanksgiving at Camp Hancock will long be memorable

for two features: a splendid turkey dinner in every company mess hall, with seconds for all who wanted them; and a most enthusiastic meeting, attended by 500 soldiers, in Y. M. C. A. Building 76. Thanksgiving was a holiday throughout the whole camp, and the hardest work that most fellows had was to sign the payroll. Many took advantage of the opportunity to spend the afternoon and evening in Augusta, a large number, in fact, being invited to spend the greater part of the day at homes in the city; others participated in the football games or cheered from the sidelines.

Brigadier-General Albert J. Logan and Captain Frederick P. Schoonmaker addressed the gathering at the Y. M. C. A.; both found a special significance in such a Thanksgiving, and Captain Schoonmaker grew a bit prophetic when he said:

> It's either our Government and our lives, or German militarism will rule the world. That is why I am here, and that is why you are here to-day. Sometimes I have feared that the liberty America has accorded her citizens might be detrimental to the interests of the Government—might affect the solidarity of the people. But when I look at you splendid fellows, I see the answer—the whole nation is united, and will remain so until we come out of the war victorious. I am sure if you fight hard we will emerge from this war with democracy, instead of autocracy, ruling the world.

And while the men in khaki were solemnly, yet with typical soldier enthusiasm, observing Thanksgiving under novel conditions in Southern Sands, the " folks at home " were reading the message of cheer which Colonel Rickards had written upon request:

The officers and men of the 112th Infantry send a greeting to the friends at home. We know that we will have a place in the thoughts of the loved ones and friends as they gather at the fireside, family altar or place of public worship on Thanksgiving morning to acknowledge the many benefits that the Great Ruler of the universe has bestowed.

Though we as a country are at war, our ties broken for the time being, thousands upon thousands of hearts heavy and sore as they look forward to the possibilities of the future, let us not give way to despondency, but rather that the conditions urge us on to still greater devotion to our country, a stronger determination to render to it the highest service our several abilities are capable of—all looking forward to the greater and brighter day that must come, even though we must pass through a crucible to attain it.

All will return, the majority with health, some broken in health, others with a limb left on some field of battle, while there will no doubt be those whose bodies will be laid to rest in soldiers' graves—lives given in defense of the principles of Christian teaching.

But all will return, if not in body, then in spirit, and we trust our friends will reconcile themselves in the thought of DUTY WELL DONE. This is the beacon star of every officer and man of the 112th Infantry, which is made up of the sons of the grand old Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

When Major-General Charles M. Clement, who had been absent from the division for eleven weeks, returned from France on December 5th, and the entire division for the first time in history turned out for a parade in his honor, it seemed that the time when the Keystone boys would have a chance to prove their mettle was not so far distant after all. General Clement had been one of a number of Major-Generals to go to France for the purpose of studying trench conditions at first-hand, and it was rumored that such a visit was greatly significant.

The magnificent splendor that attended the great review of the division, the maneuvering of artillery into position, seemingly endless columns of infantry, cumbersome wagon trains, easy rolling motor transport, is not soon to be forgotten. Bands lined the Wrightsboro Road, and as the General's car appeared, one greeted him with "Home, Sweet Home," another with "Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here," and a third with "Here Comes the Chief."

The tragedy of this first great divisional review came a week later when General Order 48, Headquarters 28th Division, was published. It read:

> It is with regret that the announcement is made to the division of the discharge, by direction of the President, on account of physical disability, of Major-General Charles M. Clement, National Army.
>
> General Clement entered the National Guard service of Pennsylvania in September, 1877, and served continuously therein, including the Spanish-American War and the Border service, until commissioned in the Federal service, August 5, 1917.
>
> Under provision of Army Regulations, the undersigned assumes command of the division.
>
> F. W. Stillwell,
> *Brigadier-General, N. A.*

General Clement was for years one of the most prominent figures in the National Guard of Pennsylvania, but his discharge from the service was only a forerunner of several others that were to follow, that of Brigadier-General Albert J. Logan being included among them early in 1918.

The second great divisional review was staged a few days after General Clement's good-bye to Camp Han-

cock; on the arrival in Augusta, December 15th, of Major-General Charles H. Muir, of the Regular Army.

With the sun shining as brightly as on any September day, but with a wintry wind sweeping the drill field and making army overcoats feel comfortable, the entire strength of the 112th Infantry, together with all divisional units, took part in the pageant. In every respect it was as impressive as the first. General Muir's car was escorted up the Wrightsboro Road by the crack First Cavalry Troop of Philadelphia. The 8th Regiment band played " Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here " as the new Division Commander swept by the 112th Infantry, then standing rigidly at attention.

On Saturday, January 5th, perhaps the most impressive division review of the three given within a month, was held, that General Muir might get a closer and better view of the men he had come to command. In the rigid inspections of regiments, mess halls, and the pep put into practice on the drill field, it was evident that the division was being informed that a Regular Army officer was in command. And during these days the 112th measured up to the full standard.

Christmas, 1917, was not by any means a cheerless day, although the Weather Man did little in the way of contributing a good brand of weather. Dinners, with a menu consisting of turkey with sage dressing, mashed potatoes, celery, cranberry sauce, pickles, potato salad, bread and butter, coffee, mince pie, ice cream, cigars and cigarettes, candy and oranges, were provided for the men, the dainties being paid for out of company mess

funds. Could some of the youngsters who bemoaned their fate in Camp Hancock that day have looked ahead another year and have seen the beef stew and plain slum that was to be provided on Christmas Day, 1918, they would have eaten twice as much and smiled the more.

It was many a soldier boy's first Christmas away from home; there were many who had hoped that furloughs might come their way between Thanksgiving and December 25th, but few indeed were lucky. It was not until the latter part of February that the furlough privilege was generously extended, so that all those who possessed the funds and stood well with the company commander (for that ofttimes was an essential matter) could hustle home for a brief visit, then return to camp and settle down to the routine once more.

Too much can't be said for the manner in which the Red Cross helped make Christmas at Hancock a happy day. A thousand gift packages well packed in six big boxes were given to the companies, forty-two to each unit of the regiment. On the average, each package contained two packs of cigarettes, three bars of milk chocolate, writing paper, a mouth organ and a scrap-book, and the scrap-book was usually the work of some patriotically inclined little schoolgirl. Every scrap-book was different, and many a book was prized for weeks afterward, the jokes, clippings, essays and odds and ends that went into its composition fitting well into the soldier's impressionistic life at camp. Relative to Christmas at camp I find this prediction in my diary of that date:

Learned to-day that it is altogether probable that the Pennsylvania boys will be here in training for twelve weeks more, following the completion of the present drill schedule, which makes it improbable that many of the Keystone State boys will be over on the other side before May or June.

The original sixteen-week drill schedule at Camp Hancock did not come to a close until the middle of January, when the new twelve-week " refresher course " went into effect.

And during the latter part of December and throughout January, the Weather Man, seemingly acting in coöperation with measles, threw a wrench into the smoothly moving machinery. Heavy snows, ice and bitter cold, brought a trench winter to the canvas city at Hancock, and even beneath four and five blankets the soldiers shivered; Georgia experienced the most severe winter weather in years. Fuel was scarce, and there were days at a time when no wood was obtainable for issue to squad tents. Indeed, it was hard for a time to get sufficient wood to keep the fires going in the mess shacks. Officers bought small oil-stoves for their quarters, and congratulated themselves that they had built a framework beneath the canvas tents in which they were housed. The man in the company street was grateful then for wooden floor and sidewalls, but beyond that he had to put his hands in his pockets to keep warm, or try for a place around the Y. M. C. A. stove in the evening.

Drills were practically suspended during Christmas week. On a cold, bleak December 31st the entire regi-

ment stood muster for pay in company streets, and prayed a silent prayer that nobody would ever ask them again to stand in such bitter cold and answer " Yo " to the pay roster.

On December 30th, Colonel Rickards was ordered to proceed without delay to the Field Officers' School at Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas, and Lieut.-Colonel Robert B. Gamble, of Meadville, assumed command of the regiment. The fact of Colonel Rickards' departure for the Southwest, and his probable absence for three months, did not generally become known until New Year's Day, and it then became a matter of speculation whether or not the beloved commander of the 112th was to be " shelved " in much the same way as the War Department had eliminated Major-General Clement. But fate dealt kindly with both the Colonel and his command, and late on the night of April 5th he returned to " his boys," as he affectionately called them, to receive one of the heartiest welcomes any commanding officer could hope for. The following day, on the first anniversary of America's declaration of war, he was speeding north to greet his mother, then eighty-eight years of age, and whose husband had fought valiantly as a Colonel during the War of the Rebellion.

But this part of the story really belongs to the following chapter, the last four months of life in the Southland, the rush to prepare for hard work overseas and the lightning-like orders to get under way for the embarkation camp " somewhere on the Atlantic coast."

CHAPTER IV

FIGHTING WIND, WINTER AND MEASLES

The Tornado of January 11th—The Measles Epidemic and Quarantine—Furloughs Make Doughboy Hearts Glad—Great Parades on Washington's Birthday and on the Confederate Memorial Day, April 26th.

You can tell the " folks back home " that we have seen another southern curiosity—a twister that upsets tents, wrecks incinerators, sends sand into your eyes at 40 miles an hour and makes life generally miserable on a cold night.

This is a doughboy description of what happened on the night of January 11th, on the heels of one of the worst rainstorms the camp had had in many days. This Southern sand storm, approaching in size a Kansas cyclone, surpassed in severity anything that border veterans had experienced.

It started about 8.30, and lasted the greater part of the night, but the damage was done before 10 o'clock. Colonel Rickards' tent suffered with the rest; Lieut.-Colonel Gamble's quarters, commodious and comfortable, were rendered uninhabitable by the storm, and Chaplain Hall's house was so badly wrecked that he slept as close to the stove as he could in the front room of Regimental Headquarters. One officer's shack disappeared entirely, and several others came close to suffering a like fate.

Company A was probably the heaviest loser in the

outfit, so far as discomfort to enlisted men was concerned. Down in H Company three tents went down, and the guardhouse lost two. Here, there—almost everywhere —tent ventilators were missing, or stovepipes were scattered about the street.

No enlisted men whose misfortune it was to be out on such a night will forget it in a hurry. Over in Clerks' Row tent 2 was found to be in a dangerous predicament shortly after 9.30. Postmaster Clyde Davis and his able assistant, Warren Brakeman, partly clad, were holding up one side of the tent as great gusts of wind kept it swaying from side to side. Then Claude Moore, better known as " Slim," who had retired some time before, hurried into his clothes as the center pole began swaying, and Gordon Couch, another inhabitant, made a jump for that, helping Chester Small steady it as much as possible. Then somebody called, " She's going over, boys," and blankets and shoes were gathered in a hurry as a general rush was made for the door. By that time the tent was careening like a dory adrift in a gale, and Small and Couch were hanging onto the center pole as if it were the mast of a sinking ship. Five minutes later the whole tent collapsed with a crash, and it seemed as if half a ton of sand accompanied the fall.

That night the same scene was enacted in fifty or more instances within the 112th area alone. The occupants of tent 2 spent the remainder of the night shivering in sandy blankets on the cold floor of the regimental postoffice.

The cyclone of January 11th and the hurricane of September 30th go down on record as two of the worst storms Camp Hancock ever saw.

Then right on the trail of this excitement came the measles epidemic. Just as the camp was getting all manner of publicity throughout the country as being one of the most sanitary and healthful mobilization centers in the States, with figures to back up the official assertion, the disease got a grip on the 112th. With thirty cases reported on the morning of January 14th, Major-Surgeon George J. Schwartz decided it was time to box up the outfit, place a double guard around the 112th area, and establish an isolation camp in the hollow and the woods to the north of camp. The ban was placed on all letter writing, and for more than forty-eight hours the men of the companies were unable to write home; that the impression might not be conveyed that censorship was concealing a troop movement, telegrams were sent to Pennsylvania papers in explanation of the situation.

Meanwhile, tents were furled, and everybody, from officer to buck private, took an open-air bath of this type twice a day. By January 23d the crisis of the measles epidemic was reached with 150 patients in the hospital and 900 other youngsters, formerly their tent-mates, isolated in the new camp to the north, in charge of Lieutenant Carl C. Tinstman. Saturday, January 26th, brought the quarantine to a close, and there was a general exodus to the city; only the necessary guard and a few soldiers who were " dead broke " stayed in camp that

night. The whole 112th Regiment went to Augusta in a body, it seemed; street cars were jammed and many walked. It was " some " celebration, after having been obliged to obey the mandate of a double guard, forego visits to the Y. M. C. A. and be denied the average pleasures and privileges available at camp.

Officers had to toe the mark, too. The story is told of how Major Smathers was held up at 10.30 three or four nights after the quarantine went into effect.

The Major had been spending the evening at the home of Lieut.-Colonel Gamble, then confined to bed with a bad cold. On returning to camp, the sentry told him to halt, and then the Major tried to explain who he was. " I don't care who you are, I'm not going to let you pass," the wiry little guard replied. " Why don't you call the corporal of the guard then? " asked the Major. " That's just what I'm going to do," was the retort. Major Smathers was kept waiting in the biting cold for a full twenty minutes before the corporal of the guard appeared and tried to make apologies.

On January 30th the isolation camp was broken up, and in a drizzling rain 600 men moved back home; cots and tents were soaked as they sought to get things in readiness for the night. But the fellows who had been on the hillside by themselves for nearly two weeks were so glad to get back to their company streets again they paid little attention to the weather. Some of the men returned just in time to be called in the Motor Mechanics

contingent, the 112th Regiment contributing 50 of the 271 men supplied by the 28th Division.

It was on the same day that Brigadier-General Albert J. Logan was honorably discharged from the service, and Lieut.-Colonel Gamble assumed temporary command of the 56th Brigade. This action once again emphasized that this was to be a "young man's war," so far as the personnel of the American army was to be taken into account; and it only increased fears at the same time that Colonel Rickards' hard schooling at Fort Sam Houston might wear him down until War Department officials would rule similarly with him.

Meanwhile, the January cold wave came to an end, the ragged ends of the measles epidemic were cleared away, and the refresher program of twelve weeks put into effect with a rush. Non-coms started in to learn the gas-mask instruction at division, bayonet drills and jabs took on a new punch, and the propaganda artists at Division Headquarters adopted the "pep" slogan, and issued reams of literature, all with the one idea in view of preparing the 28th for overseas service. News of the sinking of the *Tuscania,* with 267 members of the 32d Division on February 6th, cast a damper over some of the joys of camp life for a day or so, and, coupled with the daily announcement in the papers that the National Guard of the nation was ready and willing to go at any moment, the belief grew that the time of departure was not far off.

Day after day drills and field practice went on with

renewed energy, and when night came the doughboy was to be found taking life easy on his cot, at the Y or over in the new A. L. A. library, in charge of Robert Bliss. This was a real haven of content after a strenuous day in the blistering sun of February; for it became so warm after the 6th of February that blouses were discarded for a week at a time, and officers made no great effort to enforce uniform regulations within the camp.

The first full field inspection of the year was held on the 10th, preliminary to the issuing a few days later of barracks bags, hobnail shoes, new woolen uniforms, extra underclothing and a careful check of all personal property. To the soldier all these things only increased his belief that there was " something doing " in regard to an early movement overseas. On February 21st the announcement was made that each soldier would receive a serial number, to be his throughout the war—a movement that was the outcome of the *Tuscania* disaster, when many of the victims could not be identified. So the 112th was assigned its block of figures, from 1,246,101 to 1,249,800, inclusive. Officers, too, were given serial numbers, but their numbers were not taken from the million list designated for enlisted men.

But the real eventful feature of February was the extension of the furlough privilege to deserving men of the command, permitting 5 per cent. of the strength of any organization to go home at one time. The rush under this new plan started on February 23d, and continued without interruption for two months, before a

halt was called. Then when furloughs ceased to be within the range of possibility, a blind man could have read the writing on the walls.

It is interesting to recall some of the predictions made during those last months in Camp Hancock, and under date of March 7th I find this in my diary: " Over in the street the talk is: ' Front-line trenches by July 4th.' They are figuring on getting about ten weeks' training with the British and French troops."

The history of the 112th Infantry in France bears out that this early belief was not so far from the mark, though the training period with the Allies was materially shortened by the German break-through and the rush to Château-Thierry.

Two great reviews were held during February and March, the first on Washington's Birthday, when 30,000 troops of the 28th Division paraded through Augusta, the biggest review that the city had ever seen. Augusta papers said that Lee had 60,000 troops in one review in 1863, but there were more than 30,000 in this great line of march. And what an impressive sight it was! One will not soon forget the artillery, lumbering along; the ambulance sections and stretcher-bearers; the seemingly endless columns of infantry, marching now at attention and then at route-step; General Muir and his staff on horseback; then at camp, the long lines of soldiers silhouetted against the brush, camouflaged at times by the O. D. uniforms they wore. To Augustans it was the most inspiring parade since Civil War days.

"It made me feel as though I just wanted to jump out into line with you fellows," the proprietor of a little Broad Street restaurant told me that evening.

Secretary of War Baker had paid a visit to the camp a few days previous, but he missed such a review as this. However, when Secretary of State Lansing and his party arrived on March 9th, division officials tried to make up for what Secretary Baker had missed.

A great bayonet tournament, staged in the trenches and about the dummies in the basin, or reservoir, at the edge of the 112th area, was one of the features of the program on the afternoon of March 9th; thousands of Augustans lined the rim of the big bowl and were enthralled as the pick of the bayonet artists of the old 28th went over the top with blood-curdling yells, rushed for the swinging dummies, jabbed and withdrew, then rushed on to another line. Secretary Tibbs, of the Y. M. C. A., directed the singing festival that followed, and the 111th and 112th bands played as they never had before.

Then, in addition, the whole Keystone organization passed in review before Secretary Lansing and General Muir—for three hours a constant stream of troops, wagons, automobiles, gun carriages and machine gun carts. In the reviewing party, besides Secretary Lansing, were Senator Hitchcock, of Nebraska; Hon. John William Davis, Solicitor-General; Major-General William P. Duvall, and others. Secretary Lansing was so

"OVER THE TOP" IN THE BAYONET RUNS

Men climbing out of shallow trenches and starting on the run against dummy "Huns," suspended on the rack in background—Lieutenants Schmelzer and Connell directing operations

THE CUB WAR CORRESPONDENT AT CAMP HANCOCK

When the day's army routine was over, he found pleasure in making the typewriter tell the happenings of the day to the "folks back home"

delighted with the bayonet demonstration and the divisional review that he immediately issued the following commendation, addressed to General Muir:

It would be unjust to you and to the troops under your command if I did not express to you my appreciation of the honor which you did me in the review of the division at Camp Hancock this morning. It was a splendid exhibition of America's young manhood under arms and impressed me, as I am sure it did the hundreds of spectators, with the martial spirit of the men and with the splendid training which they have received.

I hope you will permit me to congratulate you and your officers upon what has been accomplished in producing so highly a disciplined force. They bear witness to your devotion and are a credit to your efforts and skill.

I must also congratulate the state of Pennsylvania upon the sturdy type of men who compose this division. No finer specimens of manhood can be found in the armies of the republic than the thousands which passed in review to-day. To see them was an inspiration and impressed the deep conviction that with such defenders the cause of liberty is safe.

The review was different from any other the division had heretofore staged, in that every unit of the organization was represented. Even the big Quad trucks were in line, passing the reviewing stand ten abreast and traveling in almost perfect alignment. Of the infantry units, none presented a more soldierly or snappy appearance than the 112th, which had not forgotten Major Stephen Fuqua's remark of a few weeks previous, when the Assistant Chief of Staff made a personal inspection of the progress in training in all units. " It is thought that the snap in drill shown by the 112th Infantry is not ex-

ceeded by any other regiment in camp," the official report declared.

The next three weeks virtually saw the finishing touches put on the training at Camp Hancock; demonstrations similar to that provided for the entertainment of Secretary Lansing and his friends were the order of the day in the big oval, the majority of these being under the supervision of Captain Hugh R. Doane, who later became a member of the 112th Infantry when Captain Charles F. Geary, commanding Company H, was honorably discharged.

On March 25th Brigadier-General William Weigel, of Ayer, Mass., who was destined to lead the 56th Brigade through the first trying days in France, arrived at camp and immediately assumed his duties; from the very first he made a splendid impression. With General Muir in command of the division, and such an officer as General Weigel in charge of the brigade, and each officer and man of the 112th looking forward to Colonel Rickards' return, the greatest confidence was felt that the future's uncertainty could be dealt with properly, when the time came for the real test on the field of battle.

Friday evening, March 29th, the 112th played host to the players of the Washington baseball club. Clark Griffith, Walter Johnson, Harry Harper, Ed. Garrity, Jim Shaw, Joe Judge, Howard Shanks, George McBride, Bert Shotton, John Rupley and others of the Griffmen were present, and thoroughly enjoyed the regimental parade as much as the doughboys were delighted in having them as spectators. That night they

were ringside fans at some of the best bouts Lieutenant Louis R. Abel had arranged. The day following the 112th observed a holiday and flocked to the Augusta ball grounds, and there those who had been the honor guests of the infantry outfit the night before trimmed Rickards' youngsters, 4–0. It was another of Walter Johnson's victories; Frank Hart, of Carlisle, twirled for the 112th's team. The regimental band was there in all its glory; so were several thousand soldiers.

This was among the last games that the 112th nine played; for arrival of the new Model 1917 U. S. rifles, Eddystone pattern, more work at the rifle range, and a forty-eight-hour tour of duty at the division trenches, with units of the regiment participating in No-Man's-Land maneuvers, and scouting tactics at night, contributed to make April a busy month. By the 15th practically every company in the regiment had been over the rifle range once with the new rifle; even the 335 draftees who had joined the 112th from Camps Meade and Travis on the 2d and 3d of the month were familiar with the heavier type of firearm, and were being shown, too, that they would have to " go some " to keep up with the progress already made by the regiment.

From that time on there was no talk but that of movement, and day to day orders were momentarily expected which would call for the entraining of the entire division. On April 19th, in accordance with semi-secret orders, an advance detail for the A. E. F. school at Langres, France, was designated, it being understood that it would precede the regiment overseas by several

weeks. The organization of this detail was left to Lieut.-Colonel Robert B. Gamble, with First Lieut. John F. Graff, Jr., as Adjutant. Major Charles B. Smathers was selected as the Field Officer from the regiment to go. The remainder of the detail from the 112th Infantry included:

From Headquarters Company: Second Lieut. Herman S. Marshall, Sergeants Edward G. Romanosky, Charles F. Stern, George W. Lewis and Philip Short, to attend Trench Mortar and 37 mm. Gun School.

From Machine Gun Company: Lieuts. Allen M. Cordell and Carl R. Freehafer; Sergeants Horace A. Decker, Harry J. Briggs and John E. Hasbrouck, to attend Machine Gun School.

From Rifle Companies: Captain Rasselas W. Brown; First Lieuts. John F. Graff, Frederick L. Pond and Guss I. Knies; Second Lieuts. Oswald W. Bridge and Earl A. Sounders; Sergeants Frank Callahan, Harry F. Shields and Charles B. Stafford.

This was proof enough that the movement was actually getting under way, and rumors that the first units would entrain shortly were borne out by developments.

The advance contingent left quietly on the morning of April 25th, the same day that 59 enemy aliens left the 112th area for Camp Cook, Neb., there to spend the war days while the old outfit was having its hands full overseas. Those last days in Camp Hancock were made memorable in many ways; trunks had long since started on their way home, every doughboy heart was keyed up

as never before, and then on top of it all came that great farewell parade, when the Khaki marched with the Gray of the Southland on Confederate Memorial Day, April 26th, through Augusta streets.

Likewise it was Liberty Loan Day, with the nation pledging anew its financial assistance to Uncle Sam. That morning Captain Reuben E. Sharpe, of Company E, known as the " officer orator " of the regiment, spoke at Y Hut 76. Fifteen hundred soldiers crowded the place to the doors, and scores of others couldn't gain entrance at all.

Forecasting an early movement overseas—" the eve of our departure on the Great Adventure " the speaker called it—Captain Sharpe said:

Our work is just beginning. We must be obedient, we must be loyal, we must do our part and do it willingly and without grudging. Now that we are marking time for a few hours before we start on the Great Journey for which we have been preparing for nine months, let us think of all the things that we have learned. Let us " carry on " this work, solely and exclusively, along soldierly and military lines, until it is finished.

If we put our hearts and energies into this struggle, the same as we have done on the bayonet course, in the bombing classes, the close order drill and in the simulated trench attacks, as well as the rifle course; if you " carry on " with that same spirit it will carry you through to the end. It won't take long to finish the task over there, and then we will all come sailing home, to be happy in Pennsylvania and the other places from which we came.

That afternoon the 112th Infantry made history in the Southland. It not only paraded for the last time in Augusta, but it marched as the representative of the

28th Division with those veterans who had fought for the Stars and Bars in the Civil War. The sons of the Blue marched with the men of the Gray, and under one flag and in a new-born cause, the spirit of patriotism forged anew on April 6, 1917, swept everything before it.

Through densely packed streets, with throngs shouting the rebel yell, with the Stars and Bars and the Star-Spangled Banner flying from open windows, and the 112th band playing "Dixie" as seldom before, the soldiers of the 112th Infantry marched. Broad Street and Greene had seldom witnessed more impressive scenes. The South cheered the North; the North cheered the South as the veterans passed; and here and there eyes glistened. The parade took place at 4 in the afternoon, but the boys left camp at 1.30, marching to Augusta via Walton Way, over 13th Street to Broad, and down that highway. Here the column looked its prettiest, as it swung into platoon formation, following close upon 150 khaki-clad little girls who marched as boosters of the Third Liberty Loan.

Colonel Rickards and his staff rode at the head of the column, with the third battalion, commanded by Major Abel M. MacReynolds, occupying first place in line. Then followed the second battalion, in command of Captain Lucius M. Phelps; and then the first, in charge of Captain Harry F. Miller; last in order, followed the Machine Gun, Headquarters, Sanitary Detachment and Supply Company.

The 112th Infantry band marched behind the Regimental Staff. Its playing of " Dixie " in passing the Confederate monument just below 8th Street brought the Southerners to their feet cheering; frequency of the rebel yell was evidence that the days of 1861–65 were not altogether forgotten.

The parade formed on Broad Street between 7th and 11th, with the head of the column at 7th Street. Led by the staff, it proceeded down Broad to Monument Street, thence to Greene and down to 4th, over Calhoun to the Augusta cemetery. Following the staff came the 103d Military Police, mounted; the Eagles' fife and drum corps; General John W. Clark, postmaster of Augusta, marshal of the day, and his staff; then 150 Augusta girls in khaki and carrying Liberty Loan banners. The 112th Infantry took up the march behind this escort, followed by the 107th Field Artillery band, mounted; the Hundred Mounted Club of Augusta's aristocracy, and then another artillery band, playing " Over There " as the column came around the Confederate monument on Greene Street and the crowds cheered.

Miss Mary Hall, prominent Augustan, and until long after the Keystone boys came to Hancock, an " unreconstructed rebel," who refused to walk on the same side of the street where an American flag was flying, led the Confederate veterans, an artilleryman walking on each side of her. Miss Hall lost four brothers in the Southern cause, and her antipathy for the North had

only been appeased a few months before the parade. Fifty Confederate veterans, dressed in gray, trudged along, carrying the tattered battle-flags of the Lost Cause. These five old colors, with the Star-Spangled Banner fluttering in their midst, drew forth one storm of applause after another.

Berry Benson, old and feeble, who escaped from Elmira prison during the strenuous days of 1861–65, marched at the head of the men in gray, wearing his old uniform. It is his statue that surmounts the great Confederate column on Broad Street.

No sight was more enthralling, more patriotic, than that of the men who fought for the Lost Cause; and hundreds of Pennsylvania boys dressed in the O. D. woolen uniform in which they were soon to see service overseas were more than impressed. The Richmond Academy Cadets, dressed in duck trousers and blue coats, and carrying rifles, formed one of the spectacular features of the procession, and their band and three companies were liberally applauded all along the line of march.

The prettiest feature of the entire parade, however, came when the head of the column stopped at Calhoun Street, not far from the cemetery, and the soldiers, in double rank, and facing toward the line of march, formed a solid wall more than six blocks long, winding from Fenwick Street over 4th to Greene, thence to Monument Street, standing at present arms as the Confederate soldiers, their tattered colors and their escort, passed slowly down the line.

VIEW OF OFFICERS' ROW IN SOUTHERN SANDS

These little tents with wooden walls are where the élite "held out" during the tour of duty in the Southland. Major Smathers is on his way to his quarters (at the right)

One of the 112th soldier boys who was in the parade said:

I have seen the old 16th take part in Memorial Day parades back North in honor of the Boys in Blue; I have heard the martial music played by northern bands, but no parade of honor was more impressive than this. No one in the long line of soldiers standing at present arms as the veterans of the Lost Cause passed by could help but feel the significance of the great sweeping spirit of patriotism which has made the North and South one, making possible such a parade of the boys from the North, who are just leaving on the Great Adventure, and the honored men in Gray, who are not to march in many more.

Colonel Rickards, after he and his staff had ridden the line, declared that after witnessing such a parade he felt that he had "more reason than ever to be proud of these boys from north-western and south-central Pennsylvania."

In fact, every member of the Staff was pleased, and the Augustans themselves were delighted. General John W. Clark, Marshal of the Day, and Major Victor D. Barbot, Adjutant, had gone carefully over the plans with Colonel Rickards and Captain James C. Shaw, and the outcome was even beyond their expectations.

The men who marched and those who looked on knew that it would be many days before Pennsylvania lads would march again in their homeland. And it seemed that day the South was as much their home as the good old Keystone State itself.

With such a memory of Augusta, the leave-taking came a few days later.

CHAPTER V

PENNSYLVANIA'S ROYAL "GOD BLESS YOU"

The Trip Northward to Camp Upton, April 30th, May 1st and 2nd—Cheers from Delaware and Good Old Philadelphia—Busy Days at Upton—A Last Fond Look at the Hudson, Night of May 6th.

SWINGING into line with heavy packs, marching across the big drill field as they had tramped in perfect step many times before, the 112th Infantry, with full field equipment, paraded for the last time in the United States shortly before sunset on April 29th. Only a handful of spectators saw the regiment pass in review; it was most impressive, nevertheless, and the boys, knowing they were soon to leave, seemed at their best. Colonel Rickards was intensely gratified at the showing.

That night all passes were under the ban, though a few doughboys who were willing to take a chance did slip away to Augusta. The last day of April dawned cold, cloudy and generally discouraging; Headquarters Company men rolled packs during the forenoon, and looking almost as downcast as the weather happened to be at that time, fell into line, obeyed the " squads right " and " column left "; and the regimental band, blazing away with that great old favorite, " The Old Gray Mare," led the way from Pennsylvania Avenue across the Wrightsboro Road and the artillery drill field to Wheless station.

This was the break-away from the Southland!

At 3.36 the train of tourist sleepers pulled out of the Wheless yards, while a lone newspaper correspondent, Joseph Orr, of the *Oil City Derrick,* and a few bystanders looked on, unable to express their thoughts. Thus was the trip northward started. At 4.30 Companies A and B were on their way, and a half-hour later Companies C and D departed. The two days following saw all of the 112th entraining for New York and Camp Upton.

Nine o'clock found the first section of happy doughboys—for once Camp Hancock was left in the background, their better spirits had full play—at Sumter, S. C., with a small crowd at the station braving a drizzling rain to get a glimpse of the troops. An hour later the train passed through Florence, S. C., but most of the soldiers aboard the lightless special had fallen asleep by that time. The trip over the Savannah and through the Carolina swamps, lonely and desolate as they appeared to be, all possessed a weird fascination for excited doughboys who knew at last they were on the move.

And then another day came—May 1st, with the troop train speeding north through North Carolina, Virginia, Delaware and Pennsylvania. Instead of passing through Richmond, as the Atlantic Coast Line trains usually do, the first section skirted that city, crossed the James River and continued north. It was about 8.30 when Richmond appeared in the distance. Two hours later the doughboy special passed the historic residence where Stonewall Jackson died, and at 11 we had reached

Fredericksburg, quaint old Virginia town that it still remains. Then it wasn't long until the train was crossing the Rappahannock, then along the Potomac, whose broad stretches interested the care-free youngsters on board; then past Quantico, Va., the training camp of the Marines. At 1.25 in the afternoon we detrained in the yards near Washington, marched for several squares around Camp Meigs, and then boarded the train.

Late in the afternoon, as the train sped through Delaware, the memorable reception by the people of the North began. From every house, every yard and every street came the flutter of handkerchiefs and the waving of hands, and as the train kept up its speed and bowled along from one station to another, cheers of the doughboys on board echoed the answer to the greetings from the folks who cried, "Go get the Kaiser! We're with you, men!" and a score of other shouts. It was 7 that night when the section pulled into the Philadelphia yards of the B. & O., and there a large crowd quickly gathered, and the band, catching the spirit of the occasion, got busy with "Over There," "Keep the Home Fires Burning," and, naturally, "The Old Gray Mare." Never will those boys who rode northward that day forget the enthusiastic reception and the hearty cheering that the people of Delaware, Pennsylvania and especially of the Quaker City extended to them. It was equaled only in 1919, when, almost a year to the day, the 112th Regiment docked in Philadelphia and proceeded by train to Camp Dix.

At 3.45 the next morning the train came to a stop in the yards outside of Jersey City. At 4.30 the last breakfast aboard the special was served, and at 8.50, more than four hours later, the train pulled out of the yards and into the Central Jersey pier; there the enthusiastic personnel, catching a glimpse of New York across the river, boarded the ferry, patronized a number of sandwich men, bought candy and crackerjack, and at 11, with baggage jammed on the same boat, crossed the Hudson, rounded the Battery and proceeded up the East River to the Long Island station in Long Island City.

Owing to the troop movement, there was no regular dinner nor even a substitute. The men got along as best they could. The trip across Long Island started at 1.25, aboard steel and concrete Long Island cars which made fast time. Two of a quartette of aeroplanes, presumably from the Mineola flying ground, raced with and circled over the train near Hicksville and about Jamaica. At 3.36 P.M., exactly forty-eight hours from the time the first section had left Wheless station at Camp Hancock, the Long Island interurban train came to a stop at the Upton Terminal and we piled out, packs, rifles and all. The band led the march to the barracks, not far from the corner of 4th Avenue and 4th Street, which was immediately designated as Regimental Headquarters.

Following this uneventful arrival came three gloriously busy days in which it seemed as though every man in the ranks and every officer was so busy that he had

hardly time to sleep or eat; there was something doing every minute. The remainder of the regiment reached camp during Friday, May 3d, a number of the units making a more rapid trip because they were whisked through the Hudson River tubes. May 4th was one of the busiest days in " this man's army," and each aspiring youngster got his " tin Kelly," or steel helmet, got his share of new clothing and was outfitted with new hobnails; in addition, there were new socks for old and serviceable clothing for any that had become torn on the last lap of the trip.

That night a special detail, consisting of Colonel George C. Rickards, Major William C. Hogan, Captain James C. Shaw, Color Sergeant Miles C. Shoup, Private James Carrigan, Private Frank Waldo and myself left the camp, boarding the regular Upton express for the Pennsylvania station. But I shall let the diary I have kept tell the story now:

At 7.03 we left the Camp Upton Terminal, really nothing more than a shed of a station, and at 8.03 we walked out of the Pennsylvania station in New York City, moved over to Broadway and then with some curious bystanders looking on, for we were carrying our rifles and full equipment, went down at 33d Street to get the Hudson Tube train for Hoboken. It wasn't long until we were over there, and then began the hike up along what was formerly the Hamburg-American Line piers, now conspicuously marked U. S. Transport Service. We reported at Pier 2 and were assigned a place to sleep on the third floor of a former warehouse which now houses soldiers from Texas, Carolina and all over, most of them engaged in guard service about the piers. Miles and I took a shower, but the most interesting part of the trip to-night outside of seeing camouflaged

ships and learning that we were soon to sail, was the two chocolate ice-cream sodas that I got at the tube station—and the last, by the way, that I had until I reached the United States a year later.

A trip to West 23d Street the following morning, May 5th, resulted in our reaching Cunard pier 56, and that day the special detail established itself aboard the leviathan and got things in working order for the troop arrival Monday. The entire regiment, which had left between 3 and 4 the morning of May 6th, started coming aboard at 9 o'clock, and were still pushing their way into the big ship two hours later. It was a steady tramp-tramp right along. The boys carried their steel helmets and emergency rations, and looked somewhat tired as they came up the gangplank. Then came the rush for Red Cross postals, to be filled out and held until the ship arrived safely overseas; but the folks at home who got the deluge of "Safely Overseas" cards know that part of the story.

My diary records:

Eating on shipboard is some problem the first day—it looks more like a riot than anything else. It takes a man half an hour or more to get something that is eaten in five minutes. To-night I watched the mail bags going into the hold, saw the fellows crowding the upper decks, watching the flickering lights of the North River. I saw ferries flitting by, boats on which I had ridden in days pre-khaki. I realized then, however, that in this Arabian Nights trip everything is to be very, very real.

None of us knew then what the future held in store for us. Had we been able to see, had someone been able to foretell, had some divine power told us that this soldier and that, here and there among the thousands on board, were to sleep on the battle-fields of France within the next three or fourth months, perhaps hearts would not have been so brave and hopes so high that night of May 6th, with the Great Adventure just about to start.

I can well recall how attentive a group of doughboys on the stern of the ship happened to be that evening to the stories of the western front, told by a sailor who had heard the stories in turn from wounded passengers aboard the *Aquitania* when the vessel was a Mediterranean hospital ship; to us it seemed like a dream that we were leaving home, friends and the country we loved, forsaking these in our patriotism to carry on a war nearly four thousand miles away.

But we were going, leaving the life we had known so well and the comforts we had not appreciated until we became a part of the army. That night as we turned in, Old Dame Rumor had it that the morrow might see our departure.

PART TWO

UP THE LINE IN FRANCE

FROM BRITISH AND FRENCH TRAINING DAYS TO REAL ACTION ALONG THE VESLE AND IN THE ARGONNE

PERIOD FROM MAY 7, 1918, TO NOVEMBER 11, 1918

CHAPTER VI

ACROSS THE OCEAN ON A PALACE SHIP

A Seven-Day Voyage on the *Aquitania* to Liverpool—No Submarines Encountered—Hurried Journey Across England, With a Glimpse of Folkestone and Dover—Landing in Calais at 4 P.M., May 16th.

AND then the *Aquitania* sailed.

Promptly at 8 the next morning, that memorable May 7th, the third anniversary of Germany's sinking of the Cunard liner *Lusitania,* with a loss of 1154 lives, the transport slid quietly out of her berth in the North River, headed downstream, and at 8.22 passed the Colgate clock, and at 8.30 bade farewell to the Statue of Liberty on Bedloe's Island.

Loaded transports, camouflaged in all colors and designs, sighted on the Hoboken side and at anchor in the river, interested those who thronged the portholes, but it was that saying of Good-bye to the bronze Goddess of Liberty that proved the parting. By 4 that afternoon the trip was well under way and land had long since disappeared.

Honors for the first tour of guard duty went to Company D; Company A drew the detail for the following day. A regular schedule of bugle calls was outlined, and military discipline directed the activities of the six thousand and more troops aboard. Among the units on the big liner were: The 112th Infantry, 103d Headquar-

ters Train and Military Police, 12th Machine Gun Battalion, 59th Infantry Machine Gun Company, 109th Machine Gun Battalion, 837th and 834th Aero Squadrons. Then there were such officers on board as General Hutchison, General Reed, Colonel Armstrong, a number of majors and Lieut.-Commander Roye, of Admiral Sims' staff.

The trip could not have been improved upon; weather was splendid on all but one or two days, and as to submarines, not a one was encountered. As to the activities day to day and the life on board the great ship itself, the following letters, first to be mailed upon arrival at Liverpool and first of the 112th letters to pass censor and reach the United States, can best describe the interesting period from May 7th to May 14th:

SOMEWHERE IN THE ATLANTIC,
MAY 8, 1918.

Without any blare of whistles, with no cheering crowds—just quietly, as if she were one of the many tugs plying about the port, the big palace ship on which we are Europe-bound, pulled into mid-stream at 8 o'clock yesterday morning. Our journey overseas, every enthusiastic soldier boy aboard is hoping, will be a pleasant excursion.

Thirty hours have passed since the start was made, and for hundreds of those who are on the passenger list these hopes have been borne out. Only a few have be-

come seasick—so few up until the present time that the number is almost negligible.

Everywhere, as far as the eye can see, is the broad expanse of ocean, with not a single ship to relieve the monotony of whitecaps and deep blue water. All day long, with a warm summer sun beating upon the decks, these khaki-clad boys have been enjoying all the sensations of the first days at sea, and are at the rail as long as there is daylight.

Mess-time, which is at 6.15 A.M., 11.15 A.M. and 4.45 P.M. for those who are at the first sitting—and an hour later for those at the second—is the signal that clears the decks, however; just as much as "assembly," blown by the buglers, sends every man to his bunk in the thousand and one corners of the ship, and he knows then that it is time for the regular boat drill. The first boat drill was held to-day, and was successful in all particulars, and the men took to the practice good-naturedly. They welcome anything that relieves the monotony of sea-gazing.

Few ships are passed, and those few which have been seen 'way off on the horizon have aroused the curiosity of the boys. There is a delight in seeing the crack gun crew train the big rifles on every craft that passes, even at a distance. Two American infantrymen stand at each gun, assisting in the observation, and sergeants, with their spyglasses, are continually scouring the sea. So if any U-boats come into sight unexpectedly, there'll be a warm reception for them.

Everything has been going splendidly so far. Nearly

every soldier aboard, except those detailed for kitchen police, for orderly jobs or for guard duty, has been taking a much-needed rest. This is not true of the office force, however, which has been on the job from early in the morning until " lights out " at 10 each night. There has been a great amount of clerical work to be done, and the typewriters are kept going practically without interruption.

On the bulletin boards this afternoon the *Wireless News,* the typewritten sheet with a few flashes from the war zone, was posted. There was a time when such ships as these, bound for ocean ports, printed a daily paper of four pages, but in these war times such things are out of the question. But even the few wireless flashes, telling of British gains " in the neighborhood of Nieuville Vetasse," and of French artillery actions, not to omit mention of Tuesday's American baseball scores, proved the center of attention for the officers.

But the big item of interest for the soldier boys is getting acquainted with the ship, so far as it is possible with the many guards established on all decks, and in making these few rest days as memorably pleasant as possible. Despite somewhat crowded conditions and English cooking—which some have not yet become accustomed to—they are still living up to their reputation as good soldiers.

As you might know, I am going to keep a record of the trip, and here, at random, are a few of the notes I have put down. I started it the first day I came on,

twenty-four hours before the troops arrived, for four of us fellows had been designated for the advance detail, to get the office ready and to assist in whatever preliminary work there was.

The two meals we had that Sunday when we were on the ship alone will not soon be forgotten, for they were as good as any served in any American hotel, but the ones which followed were naturally not so generous. They were substantial, of course, but not equal to the ones of the first day. However, the non-commissioned officers "above Grade 17," which included the first sergeants, the color sergeants and all sergeant-majors, were splendid, from all reports. They were served as real tourists, sitting at tables of four, with members of the ship's crew waiting upon them.

Then on Monday I saw the troops come on board. It was a steady tramp, tramp right along. They carried their new steel helmets and emergency rations, some carried overcoats and surplus baggage, in addition to their heavy packs and rifles, and they were a tired-looking bunch. But when they had had their first meal, despite the riotous rush there was, they began to forget the early departure from the embarkation camp, from which a start had been made at 4 in the morning.

One of the incidents aboard ship that first day was the rush for Red Cross postals, which, when properly filled out, would in due time inform the folks at home of the safe arrival of the boys overseas. I only hope that all these cards reach their destination—not alone that this

may be a safe trip, but that these folks back home will soon get word which will explain the absence of letters. Two cards were given to each soldier, and no time was lost in filling them out and placing them in the mail bag, which was hung near one of the gangplanks.

It was wonderful to see those fellows crowding the deck the first night aboard—which was their last, too—at the port of embarkation. They looked wistfully at the many lights and at all signs of activity, and they watched with more than ordinary interest, it seemed, the loading of the mail bags, which continued from early in the afternoon until long after dark. Each soldier boy was hoping that in one of those bags, perhaps, was a message from home, forwarded many times, which would reach him soon after the ship docked " over there."

And now that the voyage has begun, the fellows who enlisted a year or so ago are beginning to realize that this excursion across, pleasant now, may some day have its grimmer features. No one at present knows where the ship is—whether it is passing through the Gulf Stream, as many believe, or whether that is merely an expression of opinion. The ship's officers know, but they are telling nothing about the speed being made, the route, the destination or any of those details—and it is just as well they don't. It gives the boys a great deal to speculate about anyhow and everyone is agreed that the vessel is making good time.

I am bunking with the military police, far from my own outfit. I did not even unroll my pack when I turned

in the first and second nights, for we are located 'way down in the hold of the ship, where it is so warm that a healthy soldier boy needs no blankets to keep warm. The bunks, for the most part, are constructed of iron tubing, and arranged in sixes and eights, so far as sections are concerned. Each section is two bunks " high," consisting of a series of lower and upper bunks, and it is quite a contortion to get to bed without disturbing any of the other soldiers sleeping or resting near you.

Bugle calls were blown for the first time Tuesday afternoon, and so by to-day the men were accustomed to them to a large extent. " Assembly " sends them to their quarters and " fire call " brings them hurrying up, in orderly fashion, to the boats.

I am sending in this letter a copy of the ship's wireless news of the day, which might prove interesting. There is no message that I can send at this time other than that I am well, and though working just as much as ever, am still able to find a little while to enjoy what scenery is to be seen. But everything still seems very strange, for this is the longest period most of us have ever been out at sea—and we're just waking up to the fact, too, that we're a long ways from home.

Nobody is studying French yet; there isn't time for that, but undoubtedly some of the boys will be getting down to that as the ship keeps getting nearer the " other side." Just remember that I am well and contented, feel in the best of spirits, and that I am sending my love as ever. Write when you can, for a letter written from

the old home town and received " over there " will be a priceless possession—to be carried for days until it falls apart. But even if we are enjoying new experiences, our thoughts are ever turning to the folks we love " back there."

FAR OUT AT SEA, ATLANTIC OCEAN,
MAY 10, 1918.

We are just starting on our fourth day at sea, and like all of the other three, despite the cloudy, foggy atmosphere and a drizzle of rain, the ocean is as calm as the Allegheny River. And so, contrary to even the fondest expectations, there has been no seasickness to speak of. Comparison of notes accounts for only two cases among the hundreds of soldier boys aboard—or the thousands, for that matter.

For there are upwards of more than six thousand doughboys on this ship, and then the figures are by no means exact. They are enjoying every minute of the trip and all of the daylight hours, so far as they are not taken up with waiting in the long mess lines extending throughout the lower decks of the big ship or in participation of the several boat drills daily, are spent on the upper decks. The fascination of sea-gazing, it seems, will never end, and sponges, small octopus, various-sized fish and the continual dashing of foam and spray as the big liner plows along only serve to add interest to the great stretch of water and its never-changing landscape.

A passing vessel is something that is ever searched

for, and so when a two-funneled camouflaged ship appeared some three miles or more away yesterday and its faint outlines could be discerned, scores flocked to the port side of the vessel and watched it until it had disappeared from view. No one knew its name, but all guessed its destination—for it was headed westward. Smoke curled lazily from the two funnels, and with no background save the unlimited expanse of sky, it seemed to many aboard that the big vessel was standing still. Sergeants equipped with binoculars lost no time in bringing them into play and getting a closer view of the craft.

But the remarkable thing about this whole trip is the manner in which these soldier boys of the land have adapted themselves to the sea, have learned to speak of the starboard, port and aft; have learned how to get about the ship without asking innumerable questions and are able, with only a day's practice, to dash up several companionways—as the stairways are called—and arrive at their boat stations, ready to jump in at the word, in only a fraction of a minute. When you see these hardy-looking fellows, boys you and I know, you can appreciate what months of training in a camp have done for them, and what these few days' experience at sea has added to that rapidly growing stock of knowledge. They have not only found their sea-legs, but they are growing to love the sea life as much as they did the bayonet runs, the bombing practice, and the regimental parades, now seemingly far in the background.

It was an odd experience yesterday morning to crawl

out of those little two-by-four bunks forty-five minutes ahead of schedule, with eyes still half closed, and then have some one of the ship's crew remind you that you were traveling farther east every hour and it was time to set the clocks forward that much. It will not be many days, the boys are figuring, until we can say to ourselves, "Well, it's noon here, but it is only 7 o'clock Eastern time back in the States."

The folks back home can never appreciate how priceless a magazine or a good book is at sea, especially on such a trip as this. A number of boys, when they started for the embarkation camp, carried copies of the *Literary Digest, Cosmopolitan, Collier's* or some other magazine, a few carried books; but as packs grew heavier and the magazines became worn, these were left behind. So by the time of embarking on this ship—which really came as a surprise to nearly everyone—these books and magazines had been cast aside. Fortunately, however, a Y. M. C. A. secretary, bound for England, is on board, and with several boxes of good books, the gifts of a generous American public to the soldier boys, through the American Library Association, these fellows who are hungry to read are able to "go to it" for the most of the day.

Now and then you'll hear some joke about the day's mail coming in; at first, it was about the newspapers, for the fellows devoured the big city papers when they reached the port of embarkation. But this ship, as I have explained, goes the home papers one better, and we are

getting our nine or ten little items of wireless news every morning. Officers and men alike are therefore taking a great interest in the ball scores and the advance on the British front. One copy is furnished the office by the wireless operator and then a number of other copies are made.

Our first real gun practice took place last night and the boys lined the rail, fore and aft, to see the gun crews pick up the target. In this they lost no time, and then the guns let go. Some youngsters, standing close to the rail or sitting upon it, learned what gun recoil was—a few hats went overboard and some sat down on the deck with a thump that shook them up. The six-inch guns, in the hands of expert gun crews, showered shells all around the stake, supposed to be the sub's periscope, and then one gunner—the boys say he is an American named Adams and one of the real expert shots in the British Navy—hit the mark four times at a range of more than 2000 yards. The fellows are figuring that there won't be many such practices before we hit the "war zone," and then every shot will mean something.

This is a great old ship for rumors. The crew delights in telling the boys how many U-boats were sighted on the last trip—these are undoubtedly true to some extent, for such a vessel as this would indeed be a choice prize, but game British gunners and wide-awake American soldier boys aren't going to let Fritz put one over without hearing a disastrous echo.

I meant to tell you that Colonel Rickards is in charge

of all the troops aboard the ship, not only our own regiment, but several other units aboard. Consequently, he is a very busy man, and his Adjutant, Captain Shaw, finds plenty to keep the office force occupied during the day and up to within a few minutes of "lights out."

The enlisted men have the privilege of walking on all decks except the boat deck and the forepart of what is known as A deck. These are reserved for the officers. From 9 to 11.30 all men must be out on deck, and then a thorough inspection of their quarters is made. It is surprising how neat and clean soldier boys, in such crowded conditions, can keep the floors of the bunk rooms. There are at least two boat drills in the afternoon, and then, as a reminder of days back in camp, buglers blow retreat at 6.30, the men come smartly to attention, and as the national anthem, blown by the buglers, goes echoing out to sea, we fellows salute as in those days back in old Camp Hancock.

Owing to the continued rain and strong wind, there were no lifeboat drills this afternoon. It will be a day, perhaps, rumor has it, before we are in the danger zone, but we must be all of 1700 miles out to sea now. The ocean is choppy now, and the ship is swaying more than at any time since we started, but we are still pretty good sailors—I am surprised at myself, in fact—and so seasickness is either holding off to a large extent or may pass us by altogether.

Last night we fellows talked about the danger from submarines and what we would do in case a successful (?)

attack was made. That question mark is there because of the confidence we have in the gun crews aboard, and we are equally confident that most of us would get away with a whole skin if anything did happen, for all drills have been going systematically to date, and I think the men would be as orderly in case of an emergency.

We figure that by to-night we shall have completed at least half our overseas trip, and if everything goes as pleasantly the remainder of the way, I am sure it will be a memorable "outing" for us all. It has been no pink tea affair, however, although the English aboard persist in calling evening mess "tea." I wish I could now tell you the name of the vessel we are on, but the censor doesn't want it known. Suffice it to say it is one of the largest ships I ever hoped to see and a marvel of construction—not to omit mention of its history, which would fill a book after the war.

ABOARD A TRANSPORT, EASTERN ATLANTIC OCEAN,
SUNDAY, MAY 12, 1918.

A week ago we youngsters were back in the States, most of us at a mobilization camp—and here we are, rolling around on a rough sea to-night, waves splashing on the deck and experiencing our first rough day of the voyage—and we are more than 2600 miles from the shores we call our own.

Just as a reminder that we are in or near the danger zone, every man on board ship to-day wore his life-preserver. From the moment he got out of bed and went

to breakfast at 6 o'clock until to-night, when he turns in, he has been wearing the cumbersome life-preserver. Several different types are worn, the two most common being the jacket and the waist belt of cork. But leave it to the boys on this boat to master both types; and as they went around this afternoon, going from one side of the ship to the other and ably staving off seasickness, they looked for all the world like some of Joe Jefferson's little men of the Catskills in "Rip Van Winkle."

A stiff wind is blowing, making things lively on all open spaces of the ship. With Silvan Hilliard, of Oil City, I was standing on the fore part of B deck about 6 o'clock—he was reading some letters from a pal, Vincent Hays, with the Lakeside Hospital Unit in France. We were very much interested, and it was then that a crest of one of the few big waves we have bumped gave us a nice ducking.

Three or four days ago we were complaining about the heat; now it is so cold and windy that it seems we are following Peary to the North Pole, though our direction is changing every now and then, and it is a difficult problem for rooky seamen like us to figure out where this old ship is. They tell us we are somewhere off the coast of Europe or the British Isles, and we are ready to believe anything.

It has been several days since we have seen any merchant ships or vessels that might answer that description, and, in fact, passing ships have been such a scarce article on the trip that the boys have become more interested in

the antics of the sea-gulls, the curving wake of the ship, the movements of the clouds and all natural " scenery." That the trip is nearing an end and will be concluded within the next two days, barring an unexpected circumstance, is a foregone conclusion, and so everyone is speculating where we will land.

Most of the boys aboard are confident it will be an English port, but then you can't tell these days. One thing sure, they will be sorry, in a measure, to say farewell to this great old palace ship, for after having been aboard for nearly a week, they have grown to like her as well as the hundreds of the crew who are doing their part every hour to send the vessel sailing through in safety. Some day, when the war is over, you'll be surprised to know that we traveled on such a stately craft.

I shall never forget the program that was given last evening by the band, the artists of the regiment and the talent from several other units aboard. The whole entertainment was for the benefit of a certain seaman's charity and was given in the magnificently furnished smoking room of the vessel. All officers aboard who were not on duty were present, and Colonel Rickards presided at the gathering. A program, printed aboard ship, and carrying out the Allied sentiment in its decorative features, was furnished each one, and we are only hoping that we will be able to save these programs as a memento of this never-to-be-forgotten trip " over there."

The affair was only for the officers of the units on the transport and for those in command of the ship; I hap-

pened to get there because the Colonel said he wanted a record of the proceedings, and I surely appreciated his kindness. Never did the band and orchestra sound better than on this occasion. Back in camp I thought they established great old records for playing, but they have accumulated even more enthusiasm since they bade good-bye to the States, and the way they played " The Star-Spangled Banner," just after " God Save the King " and " The Marseillaise," last night, made the hair on your head tingle. It was an impressive conclusion to a great program.

Such selections as " Zampa," " Only Girl," " I Don't Want to Get Well," " Naughty Marietta," " Missouri Waltz," and others—all of which have become familiar to those who are lovers of the band's best music—were sufficient to prove to the great gathering what a band the Oil Country outfit really has.

Among the interested persons in the audience was a naval officer on Admiral Sims' staff and several Major-Generals. A young fellow, " Scotty " King, of Company D, was the hit of the occasion, with his Harry Lauder stuff, his Scotch highland fling and his " heather humor." " Tradin' Joe " was recited by a Philadelphian named Chambers, member of a military police unit, who used to be an actor; then there were several violin solos, a number of vocal selections and a three-round boxing bout, the entire program taking nearly two hours.

I could hardly believe that just a week ago I had been sleeping in what was formerly a warehouse at an

Atlantic port, not knowing when or where we were going—and here I was, sitting in the costly smoking room of what was once a real princess among ocean ships and which still sails the seas with great honors. Never did I think, when I read about this great old craft, that I would be a passenger aboard her; one of the hundreds of doughboys who would bunk in her steerage, who would eat in her former dining-rooms and who would walk her decks, Uncle Sam paying the whole bill, and we fellows enjoying the constantly changing ocean scenery—which now, however, looks pretty much alike to us. And so, you see, this old voyage has already given a good start to our Great Adventure; but as some one remarked the other day, this may be the pleasantest part of all—save that of coming home some future day—but meanwhile, whatever our lot, we'll be the same smiling crowd we were back there in the Southland. I only wish I could tell you all, but the story can wait.

There have been a number of informal entertainments for the enlisted men the past few nights. One was given Friday evening, and Captain Sharpe was one of the speakers. He is known as the " officer orator of the regiment," and the talk he gave before we pulled up stakes in Camp Hancock will long be remembered. On this occasion he was just as forceful. He outlined what a sacred privilege it was to fight on French soil and to bear our part in fighting against the Hun. " You men are Crusaders," he exclaimed, " and this is a great heritage that has been left to you."

Several mornings the regimental band has been playing on the aft deck, such selections as " Over There," " We're Going Over " and " Good-bye Broadway, Hello France " being the signal for an outburst of enthusiasm from the men. All these little features have helped to keep the boys in the best of spirits—and the best thing of all, there isn't a youngster with a downcast look on the whole boat. They're the happiest, cheeriest bunch you ever saw.

The clock is still being changed forty-five minutes every day—set that far ahead all the time—so we fellows figure we are losing that much of our sleep every night. Consequently, there is a great rush to be in bed early. And while the fellows roll about a great bit, due to the course of the ship and the roll of the ocean, they manage to get a good sleep. You will be glad to know that I am getting time to rest, and while we are kept busy throughout the day, I am feeling in the best of spirits and things are just breaking right. The busiest days are ahead, undoubtedly, and everyone, fully realizing that, is taking what " bunk fatigue " he can at the present time. With us fellows there isn't much " bunk " though, but we make up for it in the sound sleep at night.

Still at Sea,
Monday, May 13, 1918.

I am not numbering these letters, but when I get " over there," into some settled place where I can write to better advantage and have a few moments to myself

once in a while, I will see that they are numbered according to the system. This letter is part of the second packet of ship letters I am sending you, and I hope they all reach their destination in due time.

As I told Uncle Jim in a brief note, " the watchdogs of the sea " are guarding our ship safely through the danger zone. We have been in the danger zone for three days, counting this one—in the ocean territory where many another well-known ship has gone down.

They are sounding " fire call " now for the daily boat practice. It surely is interesting to see these fellows dart upstairs from three or four decks below and take their places alongside the lifeboats. There is system to it all and no excitement whatever, in spite of the fact that we are in the danger zone and any one of the calls sounded might mean real business.

Everything points to an early landing, and if Fritz —as the English call him—doesn't pop up in some unexpected place during the late afternoon or the night, we ought to dock some time on the morrow. It will be quite a big job unloading, I imagine, but I hope the task is accomplished, and we get started on our way again. We won't stay a very long time wherever we land, and there is no telling our exact destination. But in a week or so we ought to be quite settled, temporarily at least.

Naturally in such letters, written at a time when the nation was at war, little could be said regarding the armament of the ship or the disposition of the convoy

of destroyers. At dawn on the morning of the 13th we found four of the faithful little ships "on the job." Camouflaged, battle-decked and pitching and tossing in and between the waves, they kept us interested all day.

Indicative of the food we had on board, I find this remark among a few in my diary of that date:

> We are getting a bun for breakfast and one for supper, and they raise a kick if one piece of that bun is wasted. The English are far and away harder up for food than we are; and that will be one of the lessons we'll learn when we get across. The buns they give us now are very stale.

The *Aquitania* entered the Irish Sea on the morning of the 14th, picked up a pilot, and then zigzagged its way through the thickly strewn mine field. The sea was like a mill pond. We arrived at Liverpool shortly after noon, exactly seven days from the start of the trip; but, owing to the tide, it was nearly 3.30 when the great troopship docked and the first soldiers went ashore. The great tower, resembling somewhat that of Eiffel in Paris, interested us from the moment we caught the first glimpse of the harbor of Liverpool, until we passed it, proceeded up the Mersey, and slipped into our berth.

At 3.50 the Headquarters Company disembarked, and then, headed by the 112th band, blaring away with "The Wallabies" and other of its well-known selections, proceeded down one of the streets to the London and Northwestern yards. Other units of the regiment marched through the city of Liverpool itself and were

given a great ovation as they entrained for the Channel coast at another railway station.

Leaving at 5.25 that evening, we traveled until 2.15 the next morning, when the troop special of typical English compartment coaches came to a halt at the dimly lighted Folkestone station.

The splendid farming country of the Midlands, through which we traveled that memorable Tuesday evening of May 14th, interested us; we hoped against hope then that some change of orders might bring the train to a stop and we would be informed that we would train in the farmland of England rather than in the battle zone of France. Through the manufacturing city of North Stafford the train sped, the townsfolk waving to the doughboys and extending a welcome similar to the one received on the first day of May as we traveled toward Camp Upton. At Rugby we got warm tea from the English Red Cross.

Meanwhile, we were busy devouring the first army rations—the box which had been handed to us just before we left the ship. Between munching a sandwich and trying to hold on to a hard-boiled egg, we admired the hedges, the woods and the rolling farmlands, and marveled that it remained light until 9.45 in the evening; the next day we were reminded that England and the continent were observing the daylight-saving plan and had been ever since the war started. It was 11.45 at night that we passed through a railroad junction on the outskirts of the world's second greatest city, LONDON,

and we glued our faces to the windows in an effort to see something. Some dim blue lights along a stream provided sufficient illumination for us to make out that we were crossing a bridge over the Thames River. Our first few hours in England had created this impression: A most beautiful and magnificent country in daytime; at night, dark, dreary and forsaken, station and street lights very much dimmed.

Then, at 2.15 the morning of May 15th, as the train slowed to a stop in the Southcliffe station at Folkestone, we reached the end of the rail journey. With searchlights along the coast proving the only illumination, and flashing queerly overhead, we marched in nearly pitch darkness to what formerly were well-tenanted apartment houses of the Channel resort. These proved to be our barracks for the night, and while they were not so comfortable as those back at Upton, we were glad to get any place to sleep.

The big Britisher in charge of the bedless lodging house at the corner of Clifton and Sandgate Streets, across from Augusta Gardens, doled out two blankets and a ration of tea, steaming hot. Twelve to a room, with our feet bumping each other's, we slept on the hard floor. Needless to say, we were up early.

From 9 until noon the 112th boys had the freedom of Folkestone, and were delighted beyond measure with the trim-looking little Channel city, with its quaint streets and attractive shops, and its business-like aspect in spite of the war. At 2 that afternoon, scarcely twelve

hours since our arrival, we swung into marching column again, and with the band playing "Marseillaise," and the swing of other days, we headed up the broad thoroughfare, British and Canadians saluting the colors as they passed and admiring the Americans, we thought. At 2.25 the train pulled out from the Southcliffe station, going by way of Canterbury (where the boys obtained a splendid view of the famous cathedral); we watched with interest the dirigibles and aeroplanes that now and then accompanied the train and performed light fantastics in the air. Then just before the long descent into Dover the train slowed down as we passed through two large "tank" camps, where the caterpillars were being prepared for transport across the Channel.

Things came thick and fast every step of the way, and we were swinging through hot and dusty Dover streets to an old warehouse barracks standing at the foot of the cliffs; another ration of tea and cheese, another board floor, somewhat the worse for wear and very dirty—and we were "at home" in Dover, with a vigilant British trawler and cruiser squadron in the harbor bringing the war closer to us than we had yet known. About Dover Castle, picturesquely situated on the hill, and over the famous chalk cliffs, aeroplanes circled, dipped and seemingly coasted from one cloud to another as a warm May sun set over the city; from the roof of a tram-car we gazed this way and that, trying to take in a hundred sights at once, and all the time realizing we

were so close to the war zone that we couldn't appreciate Dover until days afterward.

A month later we would have given most anything to glimpse either Folkestone or Dover again.

At 2 on the afternoon of May 16th we boarded the little craft *Onward* and were off for France. Escorted by fine little British destroyers and convoyed by several battle planes, we landed safely and without untoward event near the Gare du Nord in Calais.

In France at last!

From the Southland of the old United States to the country of broken buildings and shrieking shrapnel within sixteen days! The Great Adventure surely had started in earnest for us now.

CHAPTER VII

TRAINING DAYS WITH TOMMY ATKINS

The Calais Rest Camp and Training Days in the Seninghem-Bayenghem Area—First Great Hike in France, Lasting Three Days—From Wavrans to Paris in French Box Cars—March Into Tremblay.

CURIOUSLY enough, the first soldiers the Americans and their British comrades aboard the *Onward* saw, as the little craft drew into the Nord pier, were Heinies at work along the docks. A shout went up from the 112th lads, but it was a shout and nothing more. Fritzie looked on in blank amazement, and the Yanks did the same.

A hard hike of two or three miles in a broiling sun brought us to the so-called rest camp, where we were jammed in, fifteen men to a small circular tent—conditions and congestion never before equaled. Exchanging rifles for the British type, equipping of men with gas masks and other details of outfitting us for the line, not to speak of depriving us of our barracks bags and extra equipment and articles of comfort we had brought along, occupied the attention of the officers and men during Friday and Saturday, May 17th and 18th.

And then, came the first air raid.

It took place at 10.35 the night of the 18th. It startled all, and officers quickly passed the word for men to hurry to their tents—arranged on a semi-dugout

principle, with the floor two to three feet below the level of the ground outside. The flash of shells, the bursting shrapnel and the pounding of the Archies startled us; it was the first close firing we had heard; it indicated to us there was " action " and plenty of it.

Long hikes in the hot sun for extra equipment of the British type told on the boys, and so when the long heart-breaking hike to the Fontinette station, at the other end of Calais, began Sunday morning, May 19th, the youngsters had a rough time of it. Of all the hikes that were made in France, this one to the point of entraining for Lumbres drew a heavier toll in well-directed energy than all the rest. Sandwiches and tea at the canteen were our meals for the day—and we started in French box or cattle cars for the Lumbres district, some 30 miles away and a short distance from St. Omer.

Through St. Omer and other towns and along the canal the train traveled, until it reached Lumbres early in the afternoon. Then it was a long hike and a stiff one to Bayenghem, Seninghem and other little Pas-de-Calais farming villages where we were to be billeted in barns, and cowsheds, and in pup-tents for the next three weeks. We saw Fritzie aeroplanes at St. Omer, and the Archies were pounding at them as our train went through, but we seemed quite out of the war zone when we reached our destination that beautiful Sunday evening, and found that our home was to be at Seninghem—and there the diary says, under date of Sunday, May 19th:

Now Calais is gone. We are on the first lap of our way to the front, and some day we will be there, probably up around Bailleul [but we never got to the British front, as circumstances later proved]. But here, in this French village, quietude in itself, we can dream of other days and hope that the One whose protecting care has guided us thus far will be with us to the end—no matter where the days to come may carry us, or through what perils.

The first breakfast at the new camp consisted of warm corn-bill, one piece of hardtack and two cups of tea. Then cheese and British jam were introduced, and for three weeks we lived on Tommies' rations. Regimental Headquarters was at Seninghem—with a spacious courtyard filled with boxes, baggage and an old farm wagon, not to omit mention of the ever-present manure pile that took the place of an American flower-bed. A kitchen table was the best desk in the office.

By Wednesday, May 22d, the training program was in full swing; the boys were drilling six hours a day out near the aeroplane hangars, on the summit of a hill three to four miles away, and it was no time until the boys of the old 8th and 16th were showing the British Tommies that they knew the soldier game well, and were very proficient in bayonet training, bombing and machine gun operation. Many 112th boys opened the eyes of the British with their bayonet efficiency—and chief among these was the late Sergeant John Connell, of Company F, who attained the highest record in that branch.

In the evening, the boys gathered about the little church at Seninghem to listen to the band concert by the regimental band; that was always a pleasant time.

Others visited the little estaminets occasionally, while still others grew fond of the milk and egg diet, and there was no trouble at all in getting a meal of scrambled eggs, bread and of milk freshly drawn. And this menu cost only a franc!

The first church services after arriving in France were conducted in a pretty little grove at Seninghem by Chaplain Hall at 10 o'clock the morning of May 26th. Such selections as "Long, Long Trail" and favorite hymns were sung as never before.

That evening Americans belonging to the 45th Infantry passed through the village; they had seen service in the line since November, and expressed confidence to our boys in an early ending of the war.

Then that night many of us went up on the hilltop to see the flares along the battle-line and the flashes of guns far off—some 25 miles away—to the east of us. Many of the boys climbed the hill night after night, and one evening the spectators were rewarded—there was an air raid on St. Omer at 11 P.M., and the Archies and searchlights soon got after the Huns.

Memorial Day came and went as a holiday—Old Glory was flung to the breeze from the flagpole in front of Billet 14, the Colonel's quarters. Over at Nielles, five miles over the hill, General Pershing, traveling in a fine-looking limousine, was paying a visit to the Commanding General and staff of the 28th Division. He was expected to pass through the 112th area, but for some reason, although the boys were prepared for a once-

over by the Commander-in-Chief, he took a different route.

Better than any other description, the following letter, written at Seninghem on May 30, 1918, typifies the spirit of the average man in the ranks that Memorial Day:

This is Memorial Day, truly in all that it means. It is a holiday in so far as it can be made for us fellows, but you know we keep at the game just as much as ever. How well I remember last Memorial Day, when I saw the home-town company, then fast growing to its new strength, participate in the parade and then in the exercises in the City Park. How far in the distance that now seems—how far we feel from the land we love, and yet there is a certain deeper satisfaction in being able to be here; we appreciate Memorial Day the more. A year from now its significance to us may have increased threefold, but no matter—here we are in France, patiently, willingly and courageously doing our bit.

As the days roll by, then the weeks, perhaps the months, we shall think of this day, in all its quietude and beauty (only the booming guns far away and the aeroplanes overhead reminding us of the war) as a certain milestone bringing to us the significance of the work upon which we are entering. We are happy because the future is a closed book; we are contented and hopeful, too, that in doing our bit there will be some who may return to the dear old land.

How odd it all seems—this Memorial Day! Perhaps it is the calm before the storm; mayhap it is only a passing day; but I believe that it means a great deal to everyone of us now, more than it ever did before. I can see the old soldiers marching down the main street to the monument; there are the Spanish-American War Veterans and the Sons of Veterans, perhaps the Red Cross—but the line where the boys of the old organization marched is vacant for a little while. I suppose the new reserve militia has taken its place.

But some day when the sun is shining as brightly as it is to-day, when all the world seems supremely beautiful, when birds are sing-

ing, just as they are in the trees that line these roads, some of us will be coming home—smiling, happy and carefree.

What a day! That will be our Memorial Day!

Could we have seen ahead a whole year, many of us would have been satisfied; but many, who now sleep in the shell-torn territory of the battle-front in France, would not have had the courage, dauntless as it then was, to continue the great fight. It was just as well that we did not know, and could not learn, what to-morrow held for us. The army game called for a day at a time, and that played well.

As the days went by, the training program progressed; the boys became friends of the Tommies, made inquiries as to how it felt to be up the line. One night when I went to Lumbres for a visit to the Y. M. C. A. for stationery, soap and some chocolate, I caught up with a little fellow who had been in the game for three years.

"I have been over the top six times," he said, "and all along the front from St. Quentin to Dickebusch, and I have never been wounded."

I thought that a remarkable record; in later days our boys went over the top in the Argonne that many times in one day—sixteen times in three days, I believe, was the record in the push in which our regiment participated.

We saw Australians, Canadians, Scotch and typical English soldiers; we grew somewhat accustomed to their ways and manners. We even read their newspapers, and while they brought us anything but cheering news during the days that the Germans were forging ahead,

yet they were the first to tell us that the Americans had taken the town of Cantigny and had made a name for themselves in the history of the war.

The first overseas mail arrived on June 1st. Never will I forget the day; it was one of the happiest in France. Practically every man in the whole regiment got a letter; most of the mail had been sent on May 8th, about the time we were starting overseas. The keenest delight was evident, naturally.

On June 4th word came that our short British rifles were to be turned in, and we were to get our Eddystones back again—all this after we had hiked eight miles one day to the Lumbres rifle range to fire the British type. June 5th saw some of our own boys from Camp Upton arriving at Lumbres and being sent to their respective companies. These were the ones left behind because of supposedly flat feet or other slight defects. By Thursday, June 7th, the rumor factory began working overtime, and we heard that a long hike was to be on the program soon.

The weather had been splendid with the exception of one or two days until this time, and the boys looked forward to the hike with something of the spirit of adventure; little did we know that it was to be a test of our endurance. Saturday, June 8th, as by prearranged schedule, we turned in our Enfield rifles and received our Eddystone Model in exchange, as well as American ammunition; and then we thought, in view of the war news, we were to take over some American sector and

the hike might be near to Amiens, some distance to the south. In fact, we dreamed of having a chance to march through Cantigny.

The 7th and 8th became days of preparation for the hike, and the diary says:

> The early part of the week will see us tramping and the overcoats will go in the wagon or lorry that accompanies the train, and that will help to a large extent. We are to experience carrying everything we own on our back outside of that.

And so the stage was set for the good-bye from the British training sector, farewell to the hillsides and farmlands of the Lumbres area and only a temporary departure, as facts later proved, from billets that were stables and cowsheds. But Seninghem, Bayenghem, Waterdal and the other towns had never been hit by the war; they were intact. Some weeks were to intervene before we would get into what might be the zone of operations, but as we prepared for the much-talked-of three-day hike southward we did not know all these things.

Most of all we did not then know that we were to have a share in writing history at Château-Thierry, then breaking into headlines in the oddly printed British newspapers, which told of the stemming of the German tide at the Marne city.

It was a typical summer day that memorable Sunday of June 9th, with every man in the regiment starting on his first long tramp through France—a march that was to be duplicated months afterward under more trying conditions. The sun was blistering hot, the hillsides

and farms that had become familiar to us in our three weeks' stay among the British troops in the Pas-de-Calais district never looked prettier. But before we fellows got under way, between 10 and 11 o'clock, on the first lap of what was to be a trying three-day hike, perspiration was streaming down our faces and there was a rivulet going down each man's back.

Extra blankets and overcoats were to be transported by wagons, but many of the boys had to carry this additional heavy equipment two or three miles before reaching the crossroads near Waterdal. The Headquarters Company, Supply, 2d Battalion and Regimental Headquarters boys left Seninghem at 9.50, wound slowly up the hill and made the first halt at Waterdal. There the 1st Battalion fell in line at 10.50. Meanwhile, the 3d Battalion was on the hike from Bayenghem, leaving there at 10.15. The Machine Gun Company was on the march from Le Wast, 20 miles away.

In the opinion of the boys who tramped along, carrying the regulation pack, minus one pair of shoes, overcoat and one blanket, the first day surpassed anything in border history. Southward, over rolling farmlands, up hills and down, now in the face of a hot sun and again swept by a cooling breeze as a high hill was reached, the line of soldiers wound its way. A distance of 600 yards separated each unit.

The route was southward through Nielles and thence southeast through Fauquemberges, passed by the 2d Battalion shortly after 3 in the afternoon. Twelve men

of the 1st Battalion had to fall out and one rejoined his company; the average for the other units was about the same.

Tramping twelve miles in a hot sun, with heavy pack, proved more than an experience, and while the first day of the hike was not so hard as others that were to come, yet it told to some extent on the boys' energy. That night 1st Battalion was billeted in barns at Coyecque; the 2d Battalion, Supply and Headquarters companies at Audincthun, and the 3d Battalion at Reclinghem and Lillette—names we should long since have forgotten were it not for the official record.

Ten to 14 miles was the distance covered by the 112th Regiment on the second day, Monday. June 10th, and an early start, between 8 and 9 in the morning, found the units at their destination by 3 in the afternoon. The 1st Battalion was billeted in more barns at Ambricourt and Crépy, the 2d Battalion at Monch and Teneur, and the 3d Battalion at historic Agincourt—with other units of the regiment sandwiched in the same district. The 3d Battalion, which kept on hanging up a record for hiking farther than the other units, went fourteen miles, making 29 miles in two days. Meantime, the Machine Gun Company, which had been in training at Le Wast, was covering 16 to 17 miles a day in an effort to reach our units. More men fell out on the second day of the hike; it was a rough day, as we boys looked at it—but a light rain, cooling breeze and occasional rests were the saving elements of the trip.

That evening, though I felt tired, I walked three miles to Crépy to get a first-class meal at the Supply Company and, incidentally, some official information—a jaunt out through rolling farmlands that reminded me much of the land back home.

Wavrans was the destination for every one of the units of the outfit on June 11th, the third and last day of the march, and from noon until 5 in the evening the doughboys trudged in, laboring under packs long since grown heavy. Color Sergeants John Kahle and Miles Shoup were still at the head of the line with the colors, and Swartz and I were still able to keep step with them as the color guard.

Some of the boys, arriving before our column got in, hurried over to St. Pol, then under shellfire, to get candy, chocolate and fruit. It was the first time, with the exception of the air raid on Calais, that the boys had seen shrapnel fly. It was at Wavrans that a special order came down, sending Captain Sutherland to the Army General Staff College—and so we lost the first officer of the regiment through special detail since arriving in France. Mail arrived that day—and, coming at the end of a long hike that had played some of the fellows out, it was more than welcome.

Many doughboys doffed their dusty clothes and plunged into the cool waters of a stream that ran through the woods near the town. And among them was Sergeant Phil Meredith, of Harrisburg, as hardy as any

youngster on the hike, and thoroughly at home in the cool waters of the woodland stream.

Wavrans, being the railhead in that area, was naturally the scene of much railroad traffic—American locomotives and American hospital coaches proved like old friends, though they were the first we had seen in France. Twice a day, long trains of tanks, bound for the British front, went through, and there was always a score or more doughboys on hand to see them pass.

At 7 on the evening of June 12th the regiment began entraining for " somewhere else " in France; not even the officers then knew that the 112th was destined to play the rôle of guarding Paris from the Hun, should he try to break through at Château-Thierry. The 12th was a day of not a little activity. Money to pay the boys for April arrived, Capt. Core going by motorcycle in the middle of the night to get the French coin from Division Headquarters—but payday did not arrive, it being decided that the wiser policy was to hold off until the detraining took place at the mysterious destination.

The 112th Band played all its favorites at the Wavrans station, from 6.30 until after 7, and then the fellows tumbled into the box cars and made themselves comfortable—but comfortable is not a word to be used in connection with board seats of the French box car. The Regimental Headquarters boys shared their car with the fellows from the Headquarters of the 56th Brigade. For twenty-four hours the regiment was engaged in entraining, but at 9 the night of the 12th the

first section pulled out. Tanks were sighted in a big field near Anvin—50 or 60 of them—being repaired and overhauled. Then darkness and a cold night came, and we flopped on the floor and the benches, enduring bumps and all.

The train speeding southward to " somewhere " and the spirit of adventure and uncertainty made it possible for us to forget, in some measure, the failure to get even iron rations. Briefly, it was a rough-and-tumble night on " concrete " benches and substantial but hard floors, the word concrete being used in this connection merely as a descriptive term. Fellows who escaped seasickness on the *Aquitania* found they were up against sleeping conditions sufficiently discomforting to produce any variety of *mal de mer*—so it was with no great effort that we arose, stumbled about, flopped our arms and looked out upon a strange section of France at 5 the next morning. We were crossing the Somme.

The schedule for that memorable June 13th, as a penciled record shows, was something like this for the first section: 6.50 A.M., Incheville; 7.10, Longray; 7.28, Blangy; 7.37, Nesle, with German prisoners at work in the railroad yards; 8.55, Aumale, a fairly large city, 9.40, Abancourt; 1 P.M., Serqueux, stopped here for instructions; 2.30 P.M., Chars, with a long stop and a chance to get some rum-soaked coffee; 4.20, arrival at Pontoise, the largest place we have yet seen.

It was at Pontoise that we saw old men and women, refugees from Beauvais, huddled in Red Cross box cars,

fleeing before the Hun advance. Then, a few minutes later, after the train started, we crossed the Marne River. A stop was made a few miles farther on; little girls came running up the bank, bringing the boys flowers and strawberries—and then the doughboys demonstrated their generosity by throwing coins to willing hands.

At 5.38 we were passing through the railroad yards near the Seine. We had a splendid view of Paris, some four miles away—Eiffel Tower, the Arc de Triomphe and the Trocadero. From that time until 6.30 we traveled along the Seine, with Paris in view nearly all the time, except when the box cars on other tracks blotted out the view. We saw a Marine hospital train speeding for the big city, and as it stopped for a moment, some wounded boys from Belleau Wood called to us: "We've got 'em on the run, boys; go up and give 'em hell." And our fellows answered: "We'll do that all right. We're going there now!"

At 7.30 we passed through Noisy-le-Sec, and at 8.03 we sped past Bondy. All along the way the French residents were cheering and waving to us—it was the Augusta-New York trip all over again so far as the cordial reception was concerned. It was still light at 9.30, when we pulled into Vairres, and there we detrained, bivouacking for the night in a field near the station.

The next day, the 14th, dawned cloudy. We were up at 6, and rather than wait for an uncertain breakfast, the boys, many of them, made a rush for neighboring

stores in Vairres. Blanton, Dean and I had an egg omelet, bread and coffee at an estaminet for seven francs. At 8.25 we were on the march, with the regimental band in the lead. We passed through the winding streets of Montfermeil at 10.15, and appreciative French folk threw flowers to the boys, who whistled "The Marseillaise" and "Long, Long Trail" in return. The march continued—through Livry at 11.15 and over the canal at Sevran at 11.55, and soon after we stopped for an hour and a half on a picturesque French road for mess. Eiffel Tower was still in sight, and a signpost told us we were then but 11 kilos from Paris. At Villepinte the wagon train halted and we got warm tea; this was at 2.10, and by 2.55 we were in Tremblay.

Headquarters was established in a château said to have been occupied by the Germans in September, 1914—whether that was true I do not know. That night the band gave a concert in the square. John Surra sang "The Sunshine of Your Smile," and when the concert concluded with "Marseillaise" and our national anthem—well, we felt pretty "solid," to use a slang expression, with the inhabitants. Many of the boys lost no time in trying to *parlez vous* with attractive French girls. Handbooks, brought overseas, came into play; smiles often took the place of words not understood.

That night, shortly after 12, nearly everyone was awakened by "fireworks" somewhere in the air—the German aeroplanes were again raiding Paris, and what

we heard was not only the bombs, but the Archies as well.

For the first few days all units were engaged in cleaning up their billets and putting American house-cleaning methods into practice; the change was certainly noticeable in many instances, especially around some of the French stables. But, for the most part, our billets were comparatively fine, as splendid as any we encountered on the three-day hike, that's certain.

Though we were informed shortly after our arrival that the purpose of the 28th Division was to guard Paris in case of a break-through by the Germans, there was no inkling until many days afterward that when the 112th Infantry entrained at Wavrans it was bound for the Toul front. General Pershing's Memorial Day visit to Nielles in the Lumbres British training area may have possessed great significance after all, relative to the state of preparedness in which he found the Keystone units.

At any rate, here was Tremblay, and over there, a bare 11 miles away, was Paris—Paris, with all its great buildings, historic, appealing, and yet, withal, so far away from us all. Efforts of a few doughboys to get even as far as the outskirts of the city resulted in their being unceremoniously picked up by the military police. It remained until months afterward for the Paris gateway to open wide to the American soldiers—and then the war had become part of history.

CHAPTER VIII

UP THE LINE INDEPENDENCE DAY

June Days in Tremblay and Bussières—First Review in France—March to Louvres, 20 Miles North of Paris—Long Trip on Bicycles and Trucks to La Trétoire—Bivouac in Grande Fôret, July 4th.

LIKE every other French town, Tremblay had its great old church, unpretentious on the exterior but magnificently decorated within. The people seemed more well-to-do and much more noticeably progressive than those of the farming area we had left behind only a few days before. Probably the proximity to Paris accounted for that.

There were a number of small stores, there were cafés and estaminets; and the barns in which the men were billeted were of substantial construction, clean and comfortable for the most part. Nowhere in the barn-billet area of France did the men have better quarters than right here.

Our first pay in France, coming on June 14th and 15th, helped make us acquainted with French stores and French customs. Foodstuffs were in demand. One little store near the square started selling cheese at a franc and a half a box; the supply was soon exhausted, and the next day a new supply arrived, with the price boosted to two francs. Even that didn't last long, and when the price was advanced to three francs the following day,

with a new shipment hurriedly brought in from Paris, a guard was placed over the store, and the get-rich-quick madame lost some soldier trade for a few days.

Estaminets that attempted to do a flourishing business were treated in like fashion. Sunday, therefore, was a quiet day. It was an eventful one, too, for that evening a big Y. M. C. A. truck, dust-covered and piled high with boxes, pulled into the main square. It came from Paris. French chocolate, *beaucoup* cigarettes, chewing gum, cakes, toothpaste and shaving supplies, not to omit mention of several big boxes of stationery and envelopes that rapidly vanished, were included in the stock. Payday had come just in time, and each doughboy bought to the limit, and chafed a little that two cakes of chocolate were all that he was able to obtain. But at that, each man was liberally supplied, and quietly congratulated the Y. M. C. A. on keeping in touch with the American troops. It was the first time that we had been served by the American Y. M. C. A., the canteens in the British area being British operated.

June 17th was the occasion of the first regimental parade that the 112th held in France. This took place on the Tremblay-Villepinte road, in a hay field not far out of town. French officers who witnessed it were warm in their compliments to Colonel Rickards.

That same day 13 French cooks of the 156th Infantry were assigned to our regiment, and then we knew our training with the French was to begin in earnest. The following day our training program was in force,

and the boys were hard at work; it was somewhat difficult getting used to French instructors, but, as indicated before, the 112th was well versed in the bayonet, machine gun and bombing game, so it needed few instructions along that line.

Personally, I shall always remember Tremblay for the fine dinner that Harris Luse, Ira Henry, Miles Shoup, John Kahle, Fred Dean, Jim Devereux, Lester Swartz, Hennen Blanton and I got at "the little café around the corner." It was a repast served on white table cloth, with real, live strawberries at one corner; a bowl of freshly-picked cherries at another; rabbit, surpassingly cooked, steak done as we never saw it before, French-fried potatoes galore, plenty of bread and butter, chocolate pudding, coffee and tea—these were some of the high spots on the menu—and the damages were only 13 francs apiece! We believed it would be many days until we got such a "feed" again, and we were right.

On the 20th the regiment moved a few miles north—1st Battalion and Regimental Headquarters going to Louvres, 15 miles north of Paris; F, G and H Companies to Chennevières; Co. E to Epiais; Companies I, K and M to Villeron; Company L to Voulerans Farm. The march was an easy one and we did not mind it. We passed through Roissy, with the band blaring away with "There's a Long, Long Trail" and "The Old Gray Mare." Groups of French infantrymen, en route to the front, and a well-equipped French flying field were

also passed; it goes without saying that we were interested spectators, even though we were on the hike.

The period from June 20th to 23d was spent in the Louvres area; field and liaison problems kept the officers and troops busy, and then at 9 Sunday morning, the 23d, all units were on their way, via trucks, to La Trétoire, a trip of 70 miles, according to the route taken. Five of us—Henry, Shoup, Swartz, Blanton and myself —believing the fine khaki-colored bicycles, Columbia-made, issued to the Headquarters the previous night, ought to be put to good use, decided to make the trip " biking " it all the way. We picked out our own route —one somewhat shorter than that which the trucks took —but one that finally proved longer than our expectations.

We left Louvres at 9.10 A.M. and went by way of Roissy, Mesnil Amelot, Compans, Gressy, Messy and Charny. We had eggs and coffee at a café in Messy at 1 in the afternoon; we reached Charny in good time, about 1.30, and thinking that was our destination, stayed there and looked the town over. Then we suddenly ran upon Capt. Core, traveling by motorcycle; he informed us that Rebais, some 35 miles away, was our destination. So at 3 o'clock we were on our way again to Meaux, and there we halted long enough to see the wonderful cathedral, look at the quaint bridges over the Marne and buy some eatables at one of the stores. Then we proceeded by way of Nanteuil, Sancy, Le Chemin, Corbeville and Voisins to Coulommiers.

Reaching Coulommiers at 8 we stopped at the Hotel de L'Ours for a real meal. It cost six francs apiece—and we ate, and ate, until we were almost ashamed of our appetites, grown ten times their normal size on the long trip. Several soldiers came in while we were eating. One of them was David Miller, of Warren, of a hospital unit stationed there; he told us of American wounded coming from the Château-Thierry front, and naturally we were interested.

It was after 9.30 when we started on our bikes for Rebais, 12 miles beyond, going along the road by moonlight. Wonderful night it was, but we were tired. It was 11 when we got to Rebais, were halted by a French sentinel with a blue lantern, and then we moved to an open field and made ourselves comfortable in a haystack. It was 11.20 then, we had covered more than 60 miles and hadn't found the regiment.

Had we known that we were tackling a 60-mile trip in one day by bicycle, it is doubtful if we fellows would have embarked on such an expedition, but we still have memories of passing through some of the most beautiful sections of France. Meaux, the Marne River and late supper at the hotel in Coulommiers—these amply repaid us for the trip. Naturally, we slept as only tired doughboys can, and it was with some effort that we got up at 6 the next morning and shook the straw from our backs.

Meanwhile, the entire regiment, traveling in French

camions, driven by Annamites and Tonkinese, had gone on to La Trétoire, about five miles beyond Rebais.

Our sleeping in a haystack under the great broad sky, with bombing planes flying overhead and making a raid only a dozen miles away, was nothing out of the ordinary for five tired fellows who had pedaled 60 miles in one day.

At La Trétoire the men were without the cookers and the wagon train, and they had to prepare a meal of their own; in other words, they were getting into the soldier game with both feet. Fellows who had never cooked before were trying their hand at frying beefsteak—this was the scene presented to us fellows as we got into the town that morning about 8 o'clock.

Finding circumstances to be as described, and anxious for a real meal, we were not too tired to bike it to a little town some four or five miles beyond La Trétoire that morning; there, after some coaxing, we finally got an egg omelet and some bread. At 3 in the afternoon the same contingent of five went to Coulommiers, which was then the hospital center for some of the wounded from Château-Thierry, and we had another supper at the hotel. We also made a canvass of the city for things to eat, and had no trouble at all in stocking up. And then, incidentally, we saw a red-blooded American girl from Philadelphia, who said her home was at Twelfth and Spruce. She had a nifty little Y. M. C. A. car.

Back at La Trétoire the boys pursued the hobo life all day—officers, too, for that matter—and there was

nothing much doing except cleaning equipment and making one's self " as comfortable as circumstances will permit." Just then we five fellows were enjoying a real meal at the hotel, so we didn't worry. It was 9 at night when we started back to camp; it was 10.30 when we pulled in.

The 25th, the following day, saw drills resumed, French tactics being followed. The wagon train arrived, and this meant that we were to have meals served hot from the cookers—quite welcome, you might believe, after men had spent two days as their own cooks. And so there was no complaining whatever when the usual front-line stew was forthcoming. The 26th came and went, bombing practice, grenade-throwing, inspection of rifles and iron rations being the order of the day.

Shortly after mess that evening the advance detail, which had left Camp Hancock for the Langres training school in France before departure of the regiment—the detail which had been commanded by Lieut.-Colonel Gamble, with First Lieutenant John F. Graff as Adjutant—arrived and took up their old places in the companies. The enlisted men told us they had landed at St. Nazaire, and from there had gone to Langres, not far from Pershing's headquarters at Chaumont.

As for the 27th, the little diary which I have kept has this remark:

I like the life in France first rate. There is something fascinating about sleeping on a hard floor made soft with grass, of having but one blanket and no overcoat (one blanket and the overcoat being

turned in last evening). There has been an inspection of rifles and of gas masks, and everything is in readiness for movement up the line when the word comes for us to go. Unserviceable gas masks were turned in to-day. The companies had regular drill as usual, and the men looked like real trench warriors when they came in from the field this morning, wearing their steel helmets.

All the liaison units of the outfit took part in a maneuver, with aeroplanes assisting, on Friday, June 28th. The planes flew overhead, and while the rehearsal of signals was going on, a Hun plane appeared. It goes without additional remarks that it wasn't long until this unexpected and most unwelcome visitor was given a shower of shrapnel from the French Archies.

The next day word came that we were to leave La Trétoire without delay, undoubtedly on the morning of June 29, and preparations were made accordingly. The boys who had been sleeping in the "hotel" on the concrete floor, or hay loft, however, found time to help the kindly lady of the house to pitch hay into the attic—and it was here that John Kahle, veteran color-bearer, again distinguished himself. And then this significant note appears:

She treated everyone who helped to a drink of hard cider. My ambitions were not so great.

Old Dame Rumor was right for once, and true to the stories she spread, Bussières, a little village of a few houses and but a few miles south of the Marne River, came into our lives. We found it a very small place, on the main north-and-south road to La Ferte sous Jouarre,

which is nine kilos to the north. Our office was located in the Mayor's office—the best place, by the way, that we found in France; and so, on tables which had been used by the village council in other days, we pounded out orders and training memorandums that were preparing our boys for the first big jump into the real war game around Château-Thierry. At that time the Marines were still active up there. It was at the same office that the 7th Infantry, 2d Division, had conducted its affairs but a few weeks previous.

Work for enlisted men in the companies, for the office force and for all the officers increased by leaps and bounds; we knew that something was to be doing some of the days to follow. The very day we got to Bussières orders came to send a number of our men to the trenches on the 1st day of July, to be attached to the Marines and U. S. Infantry companies of the 2d Division. These were to be the first 112th boys to get into the war game. The plan was to have these men spend a week at the front, to be relieved by another detail. But events changed these plans at the last minute, though all the battalion commanders of our regiment, together with those of the 111th, did spend three days at the front line. Colonel Rickards was also up to the shellfire district several times—all this taking place while our boys were working and training hard, in final preparation for active participation in the life-and-death battle with the Hun.

Every now and then Jerry planes would come over, in an effort to see what was going on. But there were

plenty of trees about, and they did not see much; then, too, without exception, the anti-aircraft guns always gave the Fritzies an unpleasant barrage.

On Sunday, June 30, every unit in the regiment was mustered for pay. I cannot forget how our Headquarters Company lined up. It seemed odd to us to be standing under the big spreading elm—one of the largest and most beautiful I have seen in France—and, something on the George Washington order at Cambridge—hear our payroll named bawled out in a stentorian voice, while we echoed "yo" for here. Camouflaged supply wagons, à la tree, were standing nearby, and in one of the similarly hidden pup-tents slept the Chaplain. Other officers of the company fared likewise.

Then came an order:

> As a preventive measure against aeroplane attacks groups of men, vehicles or materials will not, as far as possible, assemble or be collected in any place visible to aeroplanes. No lights will be shown after dark. * * * As soon as an enemy plane has been sighted, the bugler will be instructed to sound "Attention," at which all soldiers and inhabitants will go indoors or remain close to the houses or find such other concealment as may be available. As soon as danger from aeroplane attack has passed, the bugler will sound recall.

Then we knew that very rapidly we were getting into the game of self-preservation—into the game of war in which each man must look out for himself, while at the same time training (and later fighting) for the interests of the land he loves and of which, during those days and night, he often thought.

It was on the morning of July 1st, as several companies of infantry of the 26th Division, or New England boys, marched through Bussières, following a relief at the front, that we got a glimpse of National Guard veterans. The fellows told us they had been on the Toul sector, the Soissons front, and now, after a short rest, they expected to be sent to the Château-Thierry front. They looked tired, and said they had been hiking for six hours that morning, after detraining at a railhead some distance away. But what struck us most, they were all hardy looking National Guard veterans; most of them belonged to the 104th Regiment.

During the day we got the first word of casualties among boys of our own division. Seven members of the 103d Engineers, then working close to the front, had been fatally gassed.

Then, into this training rush came the announcement of the Red Cross—which to us seemed a welcome clarion call—that American newspapers, the American editions of the New York *Herald* and the *Daily Mail,* were to be distributed free to the boys on the front each day. The training program proceeded as before, and every available hour of daylight until retreat in the evening was devoted to perfection of those tactics to be used in defeating the Hun.

On the morning of July 3d every company commander in the outfit was off for the front, to look over the ground. They took their lunches along, and at 8 o'clock the wagon left Regimental Headquarters, or the

Mayor's office, for what was then the line north of La Chapelle and about Fays Farm—places which were to become familiar to us soon afterward.

Mess, incidentally, was especially good that day. We had rolled oats, meat and coffee, with milk, for breakfast. The oats was purchased from the commissary truck which visited Bussières the day before. Naturally the visit of the truck was something of a sensation. We bought candy, towels, cigarettes, pineapples, peaches and soap at rock-bottom prices.

On the afternoon of July 3d a memorandum came down from Division Headquarters stating that there would be no drills or work on the following day; the American troops would celebrate Independence Day quietly.

We had some misgivings about that, but we planned for a long sleep in the morning. At the same time we heard that the 111th had been engaged in action with the Huns, and that the two platoons which had fought alongside the French had casualties totaling 17, first reports said. Then we began figuring that it might not be long until our own boys were into the affray; there were only rumors, but the visits of the officers to the front, the detailing of enlisted men for special instruction in the reserve trenches seemed to indicate "something," we thought.

It was on this date that wrapped leggings were issued to every man in the outfit—and fellows who had been anxious to wear the wrapped type of leggings were

delighted. There was plenty of mail during the day, and so, with all these features of cheer, the fellows that night never felt better.

And yet, withal, there were some misgivings that the 4th of July wouldn't be a holiday after all. The atmosphere seemed electric with a tensity that would have to break loose soon.

Up on the third floor of the Mayor's building a group of ten of the boys played cards until rather late—about 11 o'clock. I dozed off into a sound slumber. And then, at 12.30 the morning of July 4th, something happened.

Bussières, which had been our home for several eventful days, was to be our starting point for the great game. July 4th, the American Day of Independence, was to go down into history.

As Ted Brubaker called us and then gave several of the fellows a vigorous kick to awaken them, we could hardly believe that his statement, " Boys, we're going to move right away; get up and get the stuff packed," was to be something of a historic declaration. We moved and helped make history in the next hour and a half; and with that movement, our days of training for action virtually came to an end in France.

In the pitch darkness, now and then weirdly dispelled by flares and gun-flashes up the line, illuminating the horizon, the column moved off with a rush. It was 2.30 A.M. and the day was Independence Day. Most men wore their steel helmets, packs had been hurriedly made, and some personal possessions were left behind;

most men were thinking one thought: "We're going to wade right into the thick of it now."

The band, by some miraculous maneuver, picked up all its trappings, tore down pup-tents and rolled packs without any light whatever; then slung their instruments over their shoulder and lumbered off. We fell in, straggling at the first few hundred yards, and then moved into a solid column.

I can still hear Miles Shoup saying, "Well, I guess we are into the game at last."

The Headquarters Company halted for a few minutes at the cross-roads, on the main highway that ran to La Ferte sous Jouarre; then, as the other battalions and companies fell into line, Colonel Rickards gave the command to move on, and the whole contingent was off on a record-breaking march for the front.

By 3 A.M. the entire regiment had moved out. Then, pushing on with more energy than we had ever before displayed on a hike, our throats parched and sore in the cool night air, due to the extra exertion, we swung through Basseville, then Viels Maisons and on to La Chapelle. The Headquarters Company took up a position in the woods a kilo northeast, the other battalions going into positions directly behind the third line or reserve trenches—about a half kilo in our front.

Meanwhile, daylight had come and with the final halt, we flopped on the ground, under trees, about haystacks and weeds—anywhere that we might rest and still be out of sight of enemy planes. We did not know

much about what was then taking place, but Field Order X, of the previous day, threw some light on the situation. It read:

1—The enemy is in force on the north side of the Marne River, its most southern advance being Château-Thierry. Our division will be disposed on a line approximately Nogent-Caquerets-Coerton.

2—This regiment will take up a defensive position between the railroad at Montfauçon and La Chapelle. Its advance lines will be Arrouard Farm-Queue Farm-Carr. If attacked, this line WILL BE HELD. The regimental reserve will be at Fays—[the name of the wood and farm to which our particular unit went].

Whether it was really a practice march or a matter of real importance in the war game was decided at 3 that afternoon, when Colonel Rickards sent a report to the Headquarters of the 56th Brigade; in part, he said:

The entire movement of about 4000 troops was made behind cover, into the positions occupied by them, without exposing them to the enemy's view. The march, which covered, for the longest distance, about 10¼ miles and the shortest about 9¼ miles, was made in the remarkable short time of three to three and a half hours, during which but two men of the command fell out. Altogether, it was one of the most satisfactory movements of troops that I have ever been connected with, exhibiting keen interest and willingness of the men to perform their duties without murmur or the exhibition of fatigue when they believed they were being called to the front line for active duty.

A withdrawal was accomplished at 1 o'clock that afternoon to positions in the Grande Fôret (or Grand Forest), three kilos to the south. This was in accordance with the following orders, hastily written in a hayfield at Fays Farm:

HEADQUARTERS 112TH INFANTRY,
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

FIELD ORDER NO. 1 LA CHAPELLE, FRANCE, 4 JULY, 1918.

1. The enemy in our front has retired. Our division will withdraw to the south.

2. This regiment will withdraw this afternoon to GRANDE FÔRET, via the LA CHAPELLE-CHEZY-VIELS MAISONS road, bivouacking for the night in the forest east of the road.

3. Withdrawal from the present position will be made in the following order:

Hq. Co., 2d Bn., 3d Bn., Machine Gun Co., 112th Inf., and Co. D, 109th Machine Gun Bn.

4. Wagon trains in the order named for troops will follow this column to FONTAINE LE BEAU, where additional orders will be handed them.

(x) The formation of march will be column of platoons, with double file on each side of the road, distance between platoons will be 440 yards; between companies the same distance; between battalions, one-half mile, or 880 yards.

Wagon trains will move five wagons in group, 20 yards between wagons, 100 yards between each section of 5 wagons.

5. The Commanding Officer will ride at the head of the column.

By order of

OFFICIAL COLONEL GEO. C. RICKARDS.

JAMES C. SHAW,
Captain, 112th Infantry,
Adjutant.

Verbally to All Commanding Officers,
Copy to Commanding General,
56th Infantry Brigade.

HEADQUARTERS 112TH INFANTRY,
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

LA CHAPELLE, FRANCE, 4 JULY, 1918, 1 P.M.

1. Field Order No. 1, Headquarters 112th Infantry, LA CHAPELLE, FRANCE, 4 July, 1918, 11 A.M., is changed as follows:

2. Paragraph (x) is changed to read:

The formation of march will be column of half companies at one-half mile distance. Vehicles will march in groups of five at 100 yards distance.

Care will be taken to conceal movement. Elements will be bivouacked in such order as to facilitate most rapid movement to position in the defense line in case the alert is given.

By order of

OFFICIAL COLONEL GEO. C. RICKARDS.

JAMES C. SHAW,
Captain, 112th Infantry,
Adjutant.

So at 3 o'clock on the afternoon of July 4th, while a machine gun battalion of the 2d Division that had seen service at Château-Thierry was being decorated, the 112th Infantry went into bivouac in the Grande Fôret. Interest was divided between the impressive ceremonies for the machine gun battalion on parade in the woods and the forest itself.

The Regimental Headquarters was established in a wigwam of thatch; our only typewriter was the Corona, and two steel helmets served unsatisfactorily as a desk. That afternoon, among other things, we issued a memo about being humane to German prisoners, which said that "it is neither humane nor is it a good business

policy to have an attitude of not taking prisoners," and urged the American soldiers to show every consideration to Huns who wanted to give themselves up.

It was here that we spent the remainder of July 4th in one of the most beautiful forests we had seen up until that time—the roar of the guns could be heard constantly, Hun and American aeroplanes were busy, over the slope several French and American observation balloons were up directing artillery fire—and shells were falling not far from us. We were getting educated to the war game and seeing it for the first time while folks back home were picnicking and in other ways celebrating the 4th of July.

And here my faithful little book records:

It is a day I will never forget. High spots were the rapid pace of the hike, reflection of guns being fired up the line as we marched along in the dark, the cold weather of the early morning of the 4th, the camp in the Grande Fôret and the uncertainty of the situation.

For the first time in France we had marched in two long lines, each man several paces from the one in front of him, as we went into the woods; we were to do that many times again before the war game was ended.

CHAPTER IX

HILL 204 TAKES ITS TOLL

First Casualties of the Regiment at Hill 204 on July 6th—Trying Days South of the Marne—Memorable Barrage of July 14th-15th—Chamblon, Charly and the Château-Thierry Orders.

At 3 o'clock on the morning of July 5th, scarcely more than twenty-four hours after the word came for that record-breaking hike to the reserve trenches south of the Marne, orders arrived for the units of the 56th Brigade to resume their old positions in the vicinity of Bussières. So two hours later the 112th was hitting the highroad again, pulling out of the Grande Fôret at sunrise, skirting the great broad lake that is fringed with a heavy growth of trees, and then darting out into the open, in full view of more than a dozen friendly aeroplanes which raced above the roadway at a great height.

The dew was still on the grass, and the day had not yet grown warm, as the long columns of tired doughboys, hoping for a breakfast that didn't materialize, tramped along. At 9 the head of the column had reached Bussières, and two hours later the kitchens were providing one of the most substantial issues of " slum " and hot coffee, to many a lad's way of thinking, in the history up to that time.

Meanwhile, we were getting the complete story of the two platoons of the 111th Infantry which had partici-

pated in the engagement at Hill 204, near Château-Thierry, on July 1st, with casualties of about 30 per cent. Five out of six non-coms were either killed or wounded. One American lieutenant shot a German officer dead with a single shot from his automatic during the savage hand-to-hand encounter in the wood. The number of wounded at that time was unknown, while twenty 111th men were reported missing.

We came back to Bussières to rest and try to recount to ourselves the busy 4th of July we had spent in and around La Chapelle; we hoped for a prolonged stay at Bussières, but that night new orders came. At 8.50 we were officially informed that the regiment was again to take up the march to La Chapelle and Fays Farm, retracing our steps. It was not until 11.30, however, with weather conditions far less encouraging than the early morning of the 4th, that the column got in motion. By slow and disheartening stages we finally reached Grande Fôret at 5 o'clock, and there the orders were changed, calling for the bivouacking of the entire regiment within the woods and at La Chapelle. Regimental Headquarters was established at Les Petites Vallées, two miles down the road. It had been hiking and working for a stretch of twenty-six hours, with a total of an hour and a half sleep for most of us, and the doughboys felt " all in," to use the vernacular.

There were none of the youngsters, as they stood two months before on the decks of the *Aquitania,* who dreamed they would be along the Marne on July 6th;

and yet that afternoon, on the same day that we unslung packs in Grande Fôret again, a special detail of five men from each line company and the trench mortar platoon of the Headquarters Company in its entirety went over the top with the French at Hill 204, outside of Château-Thierry.

Though we heard rumors late that night, it was not until the next day that we learned the full story and the first casualties were tabulated. That first casualty list stunned us; we read it again and again.

A copy of it ran:

RECORD OF CASUALTIES IN ACTION AT HILL 204, 6th July, '18.

KILLED

Rodocker, Pvt. Ralph E., Co. H, gunshot wound through head.
Noggle, Pvt. 1cl. William S., Hq. Co., gunshot through head.
Watt, Pvt. 1cl. Ernest F., Co. I.

SEVERELY WOUNDED

Dulebohn, Pvt. Samuel K., Hq. Co., wounded through left elbow, right upper arm and left shoulder by machine gun fire.
Glass, Pvt. John G., Hq. Co., wounded through neck.

SLIGHTLY WOUNDED

Young, Second Lieut. Albert A. L., Co. H, wounded in shoulder by shrapnel.
Lamb, Pvt. 1cl. John V., Hq. Co., injured in knee by shell fragment.
Simpson, Pvt. 1cl. John R., Hq. Co., wounded in left thigh by machine gun bullet.
Scritchfield, Pvt. 1cl. Samuel H., Co. L.
Radford, Pvt. 1cl. Otis F., Co. L.
Peffley, Pvt. Harry C., Co. I.

MISSING

Simpson, Pvt. 1cl., Co. G.
Lyter, Pvt. 1cl. Charles B., Co. G.
Barhol, Pvt. Joseph A., Co. G.
Austra, Pvt. 1cl. Joseph E., Co. F.
White, Pvt. 1cl. Donald L., Co. F.
Greer, Pvt. Jesse G., Co. F.
Strauss, Pvt. James R., Co. F.
Acchuite, Pvt. 1cl., Co. I.
Bowles, Pvt. George T., Co. K.
Lynch, Pvt. Jesse A., Co. K.

Totals: 3 killed; 8 wounded; 10 missing.

That was the list as it was officially compiled from somewhat fragmentary information on the night of July 7th. Watt, whose name was carried as among those killed, was left by his comrades for dead; later he was picked up by the Germans, and, after more than three days' unconsciousness, sent to a German hospital in the rear; months afterward he was sent to a prison camp; and late in January, 1919, after the war was over, he returned to his old organization, then at Sauvigny, France. And Watt certainly had a story to tell, with German photographs and postcards to back up the narrative of his travels in an enemy country.

William Noggle, of Harrisburg, a member of the trench mortar platoon of the Headquarters Company, "went west" after he had bagged three Germans, a Hun gunner chained to a tree so he couldn't escape making a direct hit on the Harrisburg fighter. The treacherous sniper was blown to pieces soon afterward.

Jesse G. Greer, listed among the missing, died sev-

eral days later in the hospital, and Strauss, wounded, and missing on American records for months, was evacuated to a French hospital; both White and Austra, also carried on the missing list, as well as several others of those unaccounted for in this first encounter, were picked up wounded and sent to the rear, the evacuation at first being through French hospitals, inasmuch as the Americans were operating as part of a French force at the time of the engagement.

Members of the trench mortar platoon had a long, interesting story to tell, when, with clothes torn, and looking as if they had been into the war game for a long while, they returned to Grande Fôret at mess-time Sunday evening, July 7th. Heavily laden with German souvenirs and trophies, they appeared easily as the victors of the struggle; and their vivid stories completed the picture.

Stroup, a flaxen-haired little fellow from the old 8th, claimed he killed a German officer when the latter started for his dugout and made a move to shoot. Noggle, who paid the price while returning from the unscheduled " over the top " escapade, was shot three times through the head. Nearly every man had a belt, inscribed " Gott Mit Uns," and there were German revolvers, knives, field glasses and other possessions galore. The boys made a regular clean-up—and they were wildly enthusiastic over the first taste of Hun blood.

Second Lieutenant Herman Marshall, of Meadville, was the leader of the trench mortar boys. The attack

on Hill 204 began at 12.22, zero hour, broad daylight. Our fellows were with the French; they had kept up a perfect barrage with their guns, and when they had finished that, called out: "Aren't we going over?"

Marshall told them to wait a minute, then, grabbing a handful of grenades, he started, leading the men over the top and across No Man's Land. A German plane which had flown tree-high a few seconds before had given the range of the Franco-American trenches, and the doughboys had hardly got a good start into No Man's Land when the German artillery got the range of the old positions and trenches disappeared in a cloud of dirt and bursting shrapnel.

The boys reached the second German line before coming to a stop, advancing a mile on a short front. German machine guns were all the time popping away. Most of these were located in the trees, and the gunners were chained to their positions so they could not retreat. Lieutenant Albert A. L. Young, one of the newer officers of the regiment, bombed three Huns, scattering them, after he had been wounded in the arm; and then, when three more appeared, he disposed of two with his revolver and hurled a bomb at the third. He was the only officer wounded. Immediately after the raid the Americans were exposed to a heavy barrage from the German guns, and this continued during the night.

On Sunday Regimental Headquarters experienced its first dose of shellfire. Shortly after 11.15 that morning 9-inch shells from a German gun six miles away be-

gan bursting in the field to the rear of the château, kicking up great clouds of dirt and each time making a gain in the direction of the building, scattering shrapnel this way and that. The bombardment, however, resulted in no casualties, but it created plenty of excitement. At 12.30 A.M., July 8th, the bombardment started again, and became so warm that some of the occupants of the house sought cover elsewhere.

Then July 8th dawned. Orders came for a movement from La Chapelle and Grande Fôret to reserve trenches near Fays Farm—those taken up by us on July 4th and evacuated the same day. But before the move started Colonel Alexis Jeunet, of the 3d Division, paid a visit to the boys at Headquarters; his Headquarters, he said, was only four miles away, but closer to the Marne than ours was at that time.

Those days from July 9th to the 17th, when the Pennsylvania Division bore the brunt of the heavy German fire, can never be erased from the memory of those brave boys who held the trenches. The terrific artillery duel of the night of July 14th–15th, that cannonading which was heard even in Paris, took a heavy toll. Arrouard, Nogentel and the other little villages and farms occupied by the 112th companies became virtual death-pockets. On our right the 55th Brigade was expending every effort, individual and collective, to break up the German advance, then across the Marne River. The story of how the Keystone Division, transformed from a "green" unit to a veteran fighting force in the testing fire of a

night, sent the Hun reeling back to the Marne and scurrying for shelter on the north bank has been written long before this.

The part that the 55th Brigade played forms one of the most heroic chapters of America's participation in the world war; and the steadfast rôle of the 56th Brigade under the death-dealing shrapnel fire of Jerry's guns, was superb as well.

In detail, the record of the 112th Infantry during that trying period ran something like this:

On July 7th two platoons, one from Company G and another from Company I, left at 4.30 in the afternoon, reporting to Moucherelle Farm, G platoon being assigned to the left of the first line and the platoon from Company I to the right of the first line, extending from a small wood just south of the crest of Hill 204 to the River Marne, approximately 600 meters. In other words, these platoons were sent into action with the French west and northwest of Château-Thierry and attached to the 146th French Regiment.

The following day, owing to a heavy enemy attack at 10.30 P.M., the left flank platoon, that of Company G, was obliged to withdraw; a call for a barrage was immediately answered, the enemy was driven back and the old first-line positions reassumed. On July 9th the Germans again attacked the same position on Hill 204, enfilading both the right and left platoons, and succeeding in establishing a machine gun post on the left flank. Exposed to shellfire, subjected to front-line hardships

and battling in a hot July sun, now and then sustaining casualties that might have broken the spirit of men less determined, these platoons, sent into the front line for "purposes of training," gave a splendid account of themselves. Fifteen men from these platoons, caught in a first-aid dressing station back of the line, were subjected to a heavy shrapnel barrage, and when one platoon withdrew to take up a better defensive position, these men were left for hours at the mercy of German shell-fire. Such was the story that Sergeant Nagle, afterwards Lieutenant, told as he stumbled into Regimental Headquarters late on the night of the 9th. The story he and another non-com told was so discouraging that little hope was expressed of seeing the two platoons again. However, by the 13th, when a relief had been effected, the remnants returned to the 112th and rejoined their organization. For several days Lieut. William W. Shatzer and Lieut. Eric Munson, commanding the G and I platoons, respectively, had been reported as missing. Shatzer returned with a mountaineer's beard; Munson came back a broken man, nerves shattered and was later evacuated to one of the base hospitals with a severe case of shellshock.

Meanwhile, we had sent two full companies into the front line along the Marne River, this in accordance with a secret letter from Division Headquarters dated July 8th. Companies H and M were detached and reported to the 156th French Infantry for front-line duty, remaining with them until the night of the 17th–18th, when

a relief was effected. Disposition of the Regiment on the 9th showed the Headquarters and Machine Gun Companies still in bivouac at Fays Fme., Sanitary Detachment and Regimental Headquarters being housed in the farm buildings alongside the road, a kilometer from La Chapelle; 1st Battalion at Les Maisons; 2d Battalion less Company H at Queue Fme., and 3d Battalion less Company M at Le Grande Troncet. The supply dump was camouflaged in the Grande Fôret.

On July 12th, General Pershing, showing considerable interest in the formation of American units along the Marne, visited the 112th area, remaining in the 1st Battalion sector for fully half an hour.

Lieutenant Charles R. Galbrath, Jr., who was Adjutant of the battalion, described the event some time later.

"For several days we had been expecting the Commander-in-Chief of the American Expeditionary Forces," he said, "and we had been told to be on the lookout. One morning a telephone message came from Regimental Headquarters that the General had passed there in his car and would be in our area in a few minutes. We all 'snapped to it' then. Five or six runners were sent out and by that time General Pershing was on the scene. I have never seen a handsomer soldier or a man of such splendid military bearing as General Pershing; he was a soldier, every inch of him. I can still recall how, after greeting the officers at battalion headquarters, General Pershing started on the tour of inspection, with Captain Jim Henderson, of Oil City, in the lead. He called to him, 'Captain, you'll have to step livelier, or I'll be right on your heels.' And you know that Captain Jim was no slow stepper."

Though Jerry artillery was now and then shelling one position or another, no shells dropped close while

the Commander-in-Chief of the American Expeditionary Forces was about. His limousine, however, could well have been a target for shellfire from across the Marne. For eight minutes the German guns tried to rain death in upon the 1st Battalion later on the same afternoon, but no great damage was done.

The following day the sector of the regiment was extended eastward to include La Ferme la Trinité, with the centers of resistance now at Arrouard and La Petit Noues. The regiment's lengthened line, as shown by the map, read something like this: La Petit Queue Fme., exclusive, on the west, to La Fme. la Trinité on the east, inclusive. This new disposition was completed by 10 o'clock that night. The same evening Company L had relieved Company I, of the 111th Infantry, in the front line of Bois de Loup—so the 112th Infantry then had three full companies in the front line with the French: H, L and M. The 14th and 15th found the disposition of the regiment with 40 men of the Machine Gun Company and the 1st Battalion at Arrouard; Companies E and F and 40 men of the Machine Gun Company at La Petit Noues; Headquarters, I, K and G Companies and 73 men of the Machine Gun Company at Fays Fme.; with Companies H, L and M, as previously stated, in the front line with the French about Nogentel, south of the Marne River.

July 14th is France's day of independence; Bastille Day is another name for it, too. It was Sunday, and orders from Division prescribed that it should be a holi-

day. And yet in France holidays have already belied their name to the men in the ranks. It was no surprise, therefore, when at 4 in the afternoon German and American artillery cut loose, and the most savage barrage we had heard up until that time began, growing in intensity as the daylight waned, increasing in violence as night came. The earth rocked, the little building in which our headquarters was situated shook as if it were in a death convulsion—and out along that otherwise magnificent skyline of the Marne valley there were the fireworks of death and destruction, the most extensive display any soldier ever hoped to see; star shells, Véry lights, the flashes of scores of guns and the noise of a hundred thunder-storms—not to omit mention of the whistle, screech and bursting of shells. Why no Jerry shrapnel ever hit the little farmhouse at Fays, where the Headquarters was located, probably no one will ever be able to explain. It occupied a most prominent place at the edge of an open field, and the few houses nearest it had already been wrecked.

It was during this night of the 14th and 15th of July that our heaviest casualties south of the Marne were sustained. Lieut. William Orr, of Philadelphia, an officer of Company E, was the first officer to fall in action, cut down by shrapnel in the shallow trenches of the 2d Battalion.

Coupled with the shellfire, the Germans sent over gas during the night and one alarm followed another. Colonel Rickards and his staff, realizing that the situation

might become more serious at any moment, were busy at 1.30 A.M. preparing orders to stem a German attack on the south bank of the Marne if the Huns crossed.

They did cross later, but they reached the south bank of the river in the district between Château-Thierry and Dormans, and so it fell to the 109th and 110th Infantry, holding that sector, to throw back the advance. Thus it came about that Conde-en-Brie and the little towns south of the Marne were given a name in history. The 112th and 111th stood ready to do their full share; but just then all they could do was to dodge a hail of shells that hourly took their toll.

Doctors worked at the hurriedly arranged first-aid stations, practically in the open, and not immune from gas. Men of the Supply Company going to the front were caught in the gas clouds. Shellfire swept the roads, and a new rolling kitchen destined for Company C was blown up en route, while a 1st Battalion water-cart went skyward as a German shell made a direct hit.

Ambulances dashed up the road to La Chapelle and hurried back all day, the drivers seeming not to care how close shells were falling. More guns were hurried into position, reeling down the roadway amid clouds of dust and in the broad daylight. Some took up positions near Fays, but others went farther down the slope. The whole situation was alive with excitement.

Over the telephone came reports of the casualties during the night; in groups of three and four the names were tabulated, and the list filed. By the afternoon of

July 15th the figures showed that the 1st Battalion had lost 2 killed and 41 wounded; the 2d Battalion, 11 killed and 35 wounded. That night Chaplain David G. Mann, working with a fatigue party whose faces were pale and drawn, buried the dead of the 2d Battalion, while Jerry shells whistled overhead, and some broke nearby; and the day following the body of Lieut. Orr was laid to rest under a big tree opposite Regimental Headquarters. Musician Francis Maloney blew taps.

And here was July 15th, the anniversary of the call into active service! The outlook that day seemed grim and disheartening; our first pals, those brief reports over the field telephone told us, had fallen.

Jerry planes were active, and in full view that afternoon they brought down an American observation balloon and one French plane. Moreover, late that night word came that three officers were temporarily out of the war game—Lieut. William R. Wadsworth and Captain Reuben Sharpe, gassed; Captain Lucius M. Phelps, hit with shrapnel in the arm.

Then Germany, in a last desperate effort to get to Paris, threw her troops across the Marne River, sent them over *en masse* from Jaulgonne, Marcilly, Charteves and those other little Marne River villages on the line between Château-Thierry and Dormans; sent them across, and pushing southward, only to run into that iron wall of "green" Pennsylvania troops who did not know how to retreat. Events moved quickly when that news came.

Early on the morning of July 18th, while French soldiers strung barbed wire entanglements at Fays Farm, our boys were on the 8-mile march to Chamblon, directly east of our position. We reached there at 10.30, and found by looking at the map we were about three miles southwest of St. Agnan, then the crest of the German rush southward. We could see the Hun's observation balloons, and every man was told to keep under cover.

Down in the valley, two hundred yards from the Headquarters Company, French 75's kept up a continual banging—and then came the great word, via the little French wireless station in the steel shed behind Headquarters—the Yanks had started their big push around Château-Thierry and south of the Marne. Our boys were elated. First reports said that twenty villages had fallen to the Americans and French on a 28-mile line. The artillery din in our valley knew no let-up; night and day it was going. Daring French aviators brought down two of the German sausage balloons and scored a third "fall" within view of our roadside billet on the 19th.

Then came the great news of the 20th; the Germans were retreating across the Marne, and each hour the wireless, supplemented by the American papers then reaching us from Paris, was telling of the progress. Through the glasses we could see the great column of smoke from one village fired by the Huns. The French 75's left the valley and moved to new positions—the retreating Germans were out of range.

Suddenly and very unexpectedly we changed stations that night of July 20th. From 5 to 9 o'clock we waited for the French camions which were to hurry us to Château-Thierry or somewhere near there—that was the report that gained widespread hearing. At 9, after we had waited for the trucks and had gone without supper, they came; we piled in, boxes, field desks, packs and some twenty men—an awful mixture of paraphernalia and arms, legs and equipment—and as the moon came up, the long truck train moved off.

At 6.30 the following morning we awoke, to find ourselves across the Marne and in the little resort city of Charly-sur-Marne, to the southwest of Château-Thierry. Picturesque, shell-hit and splendidly situated on a sweeping curve of the river, the town fascinated us. We had crossed the Marne at Saulchéry.

Before any of us could get any rest, the first field order was issued, assigning the units of the regiment to the woods north and northeast of Charly, to those high hills which commanded a magnificent sweep of the Marne valley, and which had almost baffled the wagoners in getting their teams and trains up the slope during the night.

That field order, timed 12.30 P.M., 21 July, 1918, said, in part:

> From reliable information the enemy is retiring to the east and north, his salient extending to and including Château-Thierry and Hill 204 is being withdrawn, and Château-Thierry evacuated. Our

troops are still pushing the enemy both from the southeast and the southwest.

The 39th Division is on our left, and the 26th on the left of the 39th. The 109th Machine Gun Battalion, Major Foos commanding, is bivouacked on the unimproved road running south from 180, north of Charly. One battalion, 111th Infantry, Major Donnelly commanding, is in the wood at La Canardierie Fme.; Brigade Hq. at Saulchéry; Division Hq. at Charly.

Regimental Headquarters is established at House 111, west end of village of Charly, on Charly-Saulchéry Road.

This was a splendidly furnished château, owned by a French family that had used it for a summer home, and whose residence evidently was in Paris. It boasted of two pianos, and "Dusty" Cameron, of the Ordnance Detachment, lost no time in giving the office force some ragtime; and then, hunger getting the best of us, since the last meal had been at noon the day previous, we tramped two miles and a half up the steep hillside and into the woods for our mess. Dinner that memorable 21st of July—known as "Battle Sunday" in the good old U. S. A.—consisted of one slice of bread with molasses and a cup of black coffee.

Tramping back into Charly again, passing a cemetery that had been nicked by shells, the office force arrived just in time to learn that the entire regiment was to be on the move at 3 that afternoon. The Germans at 10 that morning had quit Château-Thierry for all time, and we were to take up the pursuit. Our destination was to be Brasles, a mile and a half east of Château-Thierry, and so another historic field order, notable for its brevity,

was published on the little Corona at Regimental Headquarters, with the kitchen table in Madame ———'s château as a desk. It read:

HEADQUARTERS 112TH INFANTRY,
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

CHARLY, 21 JULY, 1918, 2.00 P.M.

Map Reference:
MEAUX N. E. 1: 50,000.

FIELD ORDER NO. 2.

TROOPS IN ORDER OF MARCH

(a) 1st Bn.
Major Smathers.
2d Bn.
Capt. Phelps.
3d Bn.
Capt. Brown.
Hq. Co.
M. G. Co.

1. The enemy have retired, moving northward from the River Marne. Our troops are closely following.

2. This regiment will move to BRASLES to-day.

3. The First Battalion will start at 3.00 o'clock by way of CAMP-6-4-4-1-trail-MT. DEBONNEIL - CROGIS - ESSOMES-CHÂTEAU-THIERRY - BRASLES road. Platoons will follow at 50 meters, companies 100 meters, bns. 200 meters distance.

4. Trains will be consolidated and will follow the column at distance prescribed by the Supply Officer.

5. Messages to the head of the column.

By order of
COLONEL GEO. C. RICKARDS.

OFFICIAL
JAMES C. SHAW,
Captain, 112th Infantry,
Adjutant.

Packs were rolled again, and those fellows who had planned to take a bath in the small cement tank in the

back yard of the château had to console themselves with the thoughts of dust and miles to be covered before nightfall.

We were on the move at 3; the train pulled out at 5, and the historic dash into Château-Thierry, through Essomes and past Hill 204, became a reality.

Fair weather, a cool Sunday night and a pale moon—this was the setting. Cries of "Gas!" as we neared the zone of activity let us know that we were approaching. Then suddenly the whole sky was illuminated by a ghastly red glare, guns pounded and bellowed, the earth rocked, sometimes shrapnel burst not far away—we were well within the war zone; our part in another Battle of the Marne had begun.

CHAPTER X

CHÂTEAU-THIERRY, AND NORTH

March Through the City on Sunday, July 21st—Dodging Shells From German Guns—Bois de Barbillon, Exciting Days at Épieds, Rest in Bois de Trugny—The Record Drive of the Second Battalion.

THE sun was setting on that memorable Sunday, July 21st, as the 112th Infantry column, on the march from Charly-sur-Marne, neared Château-Thierry; and a full moon was mounting into the sky as the head of that column cleared Essomes and found its way through the débris-strewn streets of the city whose name was in every newspaper headline at that time.

It was Château-Thierry at last!

German guns, raining shells at intervals, let it be known that in the midst of even temporary reveries there was an enemy—and he wasn't far away. Weird flares dispelled the gathering darkness now and then, great guns resounded, and shells exploded and crashed like a dozen box cars in collision as the column kept up its creeping pace through the historic Marne River city. Through every doughboy's mind, as the thin, straggly line of heavy-laden soldiers moved forward, there was but one thought:

"We're at Château-Thierry! I wonder if the 'folks at home' know we are here!"

Then came the cry of "Gas!" Down the line it

went like wildfire; somebody called " double time," and doughboys, getting into the fast pace, despite the wearisome hike and heavy equipment, jerked on their gas masks and hustled up the avenue. Shrapnel burst overhead and shells were alighting near the river bank; the " cloud-creasing " was on, and American artillery was keeping up a concert of shell-throwing in answer.

Three or four miles out along the road the wagon train was pulling along, but more slowly. Two mules had fallen by the roadside, exhausted by the long pull.

Most of the office boys were traveling with the wagon train that night; I was tired out by the long push and heavy pack, and fell by the side of the road to rest for a few minutes when the train halted for a half hour. I didn't know I was so tired that I could fall asleep and keep on slumbering while the wagon train pulled out—but that is what happened. Then, at 12 that night, I awoke; the town and the whole highway was deserted. The artillery pounding still continued and the flashes ghastly outlined the hills to the east and northeast. My rifle was on the wagon, where I had put it as I dropped out—and so, with not a person in sight, I started down the highway. In twenty minutes I was lost in a gas-infested town, dead horses and dead men lying on the roadside and about the slopes. By some chance I stumbled back onto the main road again and a half hour's tramp brought me into the outskirts of Essomes—Essomes, with its wrecked city building, battered church, torn-up street-car line and shell-hit trolley cars.

Essomes, in its palmier days two months before, had been a beautiful little town; it was evident from what was left of the houses and their furnishings that a well-to-do class of French people resided there; now it was little more than a shambles. A French and American cemetery at the south end of the city greeted the boys when they went through. It was at Essomes that I caught up with the wagon train, halting there for the night. Clyde Davis, the regimental mail sergeant, and I slept under white sheets which we had picked up from the roadside, and which had evidently been dropped from one of the houses before the Huns departed.

We were so tired that the pounding of the guns, north of Château-Thierry, did not disturb us. Some shells were falling two or three hundred yards away, but they were all on the south side of the highway, between it and the Marne. It was 7 when we were up the next morning, and by 8 we were on our way again.

We inspected some of the houses in Essomes before we left, and the devastation wrought by the retreating Germans was not in the least exaggerated by stories that have gone back regarding crimes to property perpetrated in the Château-Thierry district; in some cases the descriptions of wanton destruction have been too mild.

Miles Shoup, "Chad" Wike, Lester Swartz and I were with the Headquarters cookers at the front of the long lumbering wagon train, and as we left Essomes we saw the railroad bridge over the Marne that had been destroyed during the heavy fire. Some Americans, mem-

bers of our own division, still lay unburied in the broad field between the road and the river; others had been given a hurried burial, it was evident from the odor, not far from the highway.

We had not progressed a hundred yards through Château-Thierry until we saw three German prisoners, who had been caught by American soldiers that morning, hiding in the cellars. One was an officer. We stopped near the town square for a brief rest; German potato-mashers lay all around, many of them unexploded, and it seemed certain that the Huns fled in a hurry.

Just as the water cart and cookers started over the crest of the hill, as we left the town itself, the Germans got our range and opened on us with their guns. The shells whistled over our heads, crashing into the ravine below, but each shot was nearer; finally deciding that such an exposed place as the summit of a hill was not a good point to argue, we hustled down the slope, the shells still crashing overhead and following us for a way. It was here we passed the body of a Company A boy, a young corporal, who had been killed when one of the German shells exploded the evening of July 21st as the leading element of our column went through the town. Several others were wounded, and the bloody packs and possessions lay strewn about; a blanket covered the dead boy's body.

A half hour later our train succeeded in making the crest of the hill, rounding a mired auto truck which had

also been shell-hit, and soon we were in Brasles, crossed a bridge hastily constructed by the engineers and saw, for the first time, what a field hospital was like. There, in a grove, were scores of wounded American soldier boys—some hit in the arm, others in the leg, a few cut about the head; on one cot a boy was breathing his last and the doctor was writing his last message. Then up the jammed roadway we went; machine gun carts, wagons, marching men—all these were crowded in the little woodland roadway that ran north of Brasles. A mile up we found our headquarters, an old tumble-down barn on the western edge of the Bois de Barbillon; across the street, in the old Brasles Château, was Brigade. Their quarters were a little better.

The first detail that was sent out was heavily armed, and it was their duty to search the caves and trenches on the hillsides for Germans. Splendid dugouts were found and plenty of German souvenirs, but all the Germans had fled with the main army in retreat. The only ones who were behind were dead ones.

One doughboy's letter, written at this time, throws additional light on the situation in Essomes, Château-Thierry and about Brasles. The first part, written under date of "July 22d, 8 A.M.," reads:

> We are in a shell-wrecked town on our way to the front (Essomes). We arrived here shortly after midnight when the Huns let up enough on shelling the main road to allow us to pass. There were many gas shells and plenty of gassed houses and craters, but the fact that we kept on the move and used our masks helped a great

deal. So we all came through—this wagon train of ours—in splendid shape.

Everything in this lovely little town has been blasted to pieces. The street railway track through the town, though embedded in the cement roadway, has been shattered and twisted; there are many holes. Trolley cars are complete wrecks. Beautiful homes are mere shambles, not a window is intact. Telephone poles and wires are awry, and the whole place looks like a sieve; in fact, besides being blasted, peppered and gassed, it looks as though several earthquakes had combined to tear the houses apart.

As we marched through the outskirts of the city, mercilessly sacked and wrecked, a pale moon gleamed ghastly through blasted ribs of rafters of the once-magnificent church—a picture so impressive that I cannot soon forget it. A soldier cemetery, indicating the recent burial of honored dead, was the grim welcomer as the train of supplies creaked and crept down that avenue of devastation. It was one of our first glimpses that proved true much we have read. And here we were, on July 21st and 22d, on historic ground.

That afternoon, penning a few more lines to the letter, the same doughboy wrote of Château-Thierry and Brasles, and of the temporary location in the Bois de Barbillon:

We spread out, so that if a shell hit the road, casualties would be fewer. The new place (Château-Thierry and Brasles) reached, we found devastation more complete than in Essomes. Vivid war pictures, hurried flight of the enemy, fierce shellfire on both sides—these evidences were presented by the appearance of the streets, houses, and the aspect of every field. Slowly and carefully, but getting used to the open danger from shellfire, we made our way to the position, found our place in an old barn several times hit by shells, and made ourselves comfortable—as much as a cold cement floor and stale straw would permit. The sun was unmercifully hot, and the road was choked and confused with many troops, wagon

trains and the general rush to keep up with Jerry—all offering a good target had his aeroplanes been around.

On our way soon again, that's the word now; but the Hun is fleeing, and so we don't mind. One meal in twenty-four hours looked good to us to-night; this morning I was lucky enough to get a cup of coffee just before one outfit's rolling kitchen started "up the line."

Would that I could tell you all, let you know that we are in the midst of big things, and our boys are doing their full share; that is all I can say now, but some day you will know the whole brave story, and of our lorry ride and march of these last few momentous days—and more are ahead, I guess.

A prediction, which the weeks to follow disclosed, that was not far from the truth.

In a cold driving rain, and with the night so dark that only a snail's pace was possible, the regiment was on its way again, the start being made at 1.30 A.M. At Brasles, in the shelter of shell-torn buildings, the advance detachment waited three hours for the wagon train, and then finally pulled out by itself, in advance of the column. The march was through Château-Thierry, via the picturesque boulevard along the Marne, providing a more picturesque setting and a hike not quite so hazardous as that of the night of the 21st and the morning of the 22d.

Shells were not crashing into our ranks again, and so we marched through the city with utmost confidence, heads turning this way and that to get a glimpse of the historic city, its buildings and its streets. Once well-furnished and well-stocked stores had been ruined by shell and machine gun fire, and stocks demolished by the

vandals who had evacuated the city on the morning of July 21st. This was only the 23d, and here we were, retracing our steps through the town with as much of that at-home feeling as though we had lived along the Marne close to the damaged La Fontaine monument for years. Halting at the blasted bridge across the Marne, scene of the encounter between the 7th Machine Gun Battalion of the 3d Division and the Hun, we took a closer survey of the situation. A machine-gun emplacement erected by the Germans in the center of the street, though badly damaged, still remained.

At a half-demolished hat store, whose stock was strewn about, the doughboys made a friendly raid, appropriating black derbies and felt hats, not to omit mention of some silk tiles; and as this cosmopolitan-looking column moved up the main thoroughfare, then trudged and puffed up the long hill that had to be climbed in order to get out of the city from the north, other troops gave them the merry laugh. It only went to prove that even in Château-Thierry the doughboy could smile and joke and feel light-hearted; and despite the severity of the hike, every youngster in that advance party was in splendid fettle and good spirits that day.

The first halt was made at the railroad bridge, and the next at the top of the hill, not far from a fallen aeroplane. Daylight had come, but there was no sign of clearing. It was raining again, and most of us were then soaked through, slickers offering but little protection on such a hike.

Another hour of hiking brought us to an open steel barn, where a Major of the 26th Division told the party that the 28th was now fighting with the Yankee unit, and that our own troops were to go no farther than Etrepilly, several kilos beyond, and captured in the sweep forward by the New England Division but four days previous. For two hours we slept in wet straw in the rain, making ourselves "comfortable as possible." By 11 o'clock we were on the move, and shortly after noon all units of the 112th were in camp in Etrepilly woods, with the Headquarters established in what had formerly been a splendid little home, in the battered town itself.

So rapid had been the American advance that all the dead had not yet been buried. Bodies of several Marines and some of the Yankee Division boys who had fallen before Hun machine gun nests, as well as a number of dead Germans, lay prone in the woods, fast decaying in the heat of July days. The sun came out that afternoon, and was welcome, but the roads and fields were still muddy when the column fell in at 9 o'clock that night and moved off once more. This time Épieds and the district to the east was our ultimate destination.

Through some error we marched to within a mile of Château-Thierry, then returned for two miles, camped in a wood and had breakfast—and how good it tasted! Then the clothing truck pulled up, and every fellow who got near made a raid on socks and underclothes and whatever else he was lucky enough to secure; and so, before we again started on the march at 1 o'clock, a great many

of the boys with wet clothes had effected a complete change. By that time the Hun guns were getting our location and letting shells fall several hundred yards away.

Here, under the date of July 24th, the little book says:

> Then we began the march to Bézu St. Germaine and thence to Épieds. Through this country we found plenty of evidence of the German retreat. Bézu St. Germaine had been taken only a short while before, and Epieds, after changing hands several times, had that morning been re-won by the American forces. We had supper in the latter town at 6.30, and at 7.45 we were on our way up the slope, under shellfire.

All along the line of march that day it needed no second look to satisfy us that we were in the war zone. A dozen observation balloons were nearly always in sight, hundreds of German shells of all sizes, machine gun strips, dead Germans, the stench of decaying flesh, scattered bodies of dead Americans, abandoned equipment—these were the earmarks of battle and a German withdrawal. One of our runners, catching up to the column on his bicycle, reported that he had run into a section of the retreating German line that morning and had some hustle in getting away; he said he had taken the wrong road, and all the Germans had not yet left the woods then being entered by the American forces.

We began to get into the " hell of things " at Épieds. Another division was going along the same highway on which we had stopped for supper; shells were bursting

not far from us, and as we started up the slope at 7.45, the shells alighted nearer and nearer all the time. Every few steps we "ducked"; then we ran on for a couple of yards—and whizz again! Then another "duck"—and a resounding bang that sent shrapnel going everywhere. A mile of this hill-climbing and "ducking" of shells brought us into the woods east of Épieds, where we hastily dug in—dug in with whatever we could find. Some few shovels were available, but some boys had to use bayonets and other makeshifts. All night shells rained through that woods; our guns banged away, too; but to us, at that time, experiencing the first terrors of being under heavy shellfire, we could not understand why we did not send more American shells into Hunland. There wasn't much sleep that night of July 24th–25th.

It was in the battle of the next day, July 25th, while the 1st Battalion was under heavy shellfire in the open near Courpoil that Captain James M. Henderson, of Oil City, commanding Company D, was instantly killed. He was one of the best liked and one of the most efficient of the 112th's officers.

Evidently hearing the shell coming, he dodged for a shellhole; but the Jerry shrapnel was a direct hit. Only one leg was found, and the fact that he wore a new pair of shoes helped in the identification. The same day Major Charles B. Smathers, in command of the 1st Battalion, was in the advance with his staff and was gassed, but his case did not prove a severe one. Several

Company G men were killed during the artillery fire of the night.

It was on this day, the 25th, that the Rainbow Division moved to the front to relieve our own division; and we stood and watched, as shellfire permitted, as the boys hustled by. That night a fierce air battle between German planes was staged over the woods and Epieds itself, and one German aviator, after bagging an American observation balloon, flew so low that officers and men were able to fire at him—but he escaped in safety. Even Colonel Rickards picked up a rifle and shot at the daring German.

It was at this time that the stories came back from our boys in the front line that women were being used by the Germans to operate some of the Hun machine guns, and that even women were playing the rôle of air-fighters.

For the next three days the entire regiment, being relieved, lived in the mud and among the trenches of the Bois de Trugny, some two kilos south of Épieds and about 600 yards northeast of the Breteuil Ferme. At all hours of the day and night troops were going toward the front, and others were coming back for a brief rest; German guns, abandoned in the retreat, were mired; and some of our own wagons and trains had a hard time getting through.

Here in the Trugny woods, through which the 26th Division's infantry had fought, and as late as July 23d had hurled the 101st Infantry into battle through the

forest fastnesses, we were given time to realize in a small way what excitement we had been through and how close to the enemy our own outfit had been within the past seventy-two hours. It was in this shell-infested wood, with hastily-constructed trenches running this way and that and hundreds of Jerry shells of large type piled about, that we began to realize more than we had before that the old regiment was well into the game. In touch with the New England Division, talking to men of the Rainbow outfit, and conversing with other National Guard troops thrown into the fray about that time, it needed no second glance to convince that things were on the move. There was a steady stream of Americans going up day after day; there were others coming back, those who had been relieved for a little while at least.

Then when our own 2d Battalion rejoined us in the Bois de Trugny, we learned from the lips of the pals we knew so well of the brave part that outfit had played in the mad dash with the 26th Division to the Red Cross Farm. This took place during the forty-eight-hour period, July 23d to 25th. Under command of Captain Lucius M. Phelps, the 2d Battalion was detached from the regiment at 2 o'clock on the morning of the 23d, and assigned to duty with the 51st Brigade, 26th Division. Without delay it was given the task of taking a hill covered with machine gun nests. A battalion of the 51st Brigade had made the attempt the previous day, without success. Similar attacks failed. When the 2d Battalion of the 112th got

into action at 7 that morning, the rush was to be preceded by an artillery barrage, but this was called off, and the attack made in old-time fashion. Up the hill they went, with all the dash and vigor of doughboys, on a perfect summer's day. There was no stopping. Wave after wave of small combat groups swept up the hill; Companies G and F were in the first, and E and H were in the second. The immediate objective was the top of the hill; and this, in contrast to what had happened the day previous, was gained without great opposition from the Boche.

Then came orders from the Brigade Commander to tackle another objective, and the dash continued. This meant a forward push of five kilos under heavy shell-fire—but the boys forged on, undaunted. Several hours later saw them at the second objective, having covered seven kilos in the battle-field up until that time.

Then there came additional orders—the Red Cross Farm near Vente Jean Guillaume, German-held, was blocking the way north to Fere-en-Tardenois. Fere was five miles away, but at that stage of the battle north of Château-Thierry, the Germans still held it and the district to the south, as far as the Red Cross Farm, in force. When the orders arrived for the new attack it was reported the Red Cross Farm had been evacuated. Companies F, G and H were sent out to advance positions and dug in. Company E was held in support. Meanwhile, the Germans were letting our fellows have it with shell-fire and machine-gun bursts; all night the fusillade kept

up and the German barrage swept the positions of the companies composing the battalion. One Lieutenant, Harold D. Speakman, of Company E, and three men were killed, a number were wounded and some gassed—but the battalion had established a record of covering more than seven kilos from the " jump-off " in a single day, a record of which any unit might well be proud.

At 5 o'clock on the afternoon of the 25th, after having been subjected to an unrelenting hail of shells all morning, the relief came, and the 167th Infantry of the Rainbow Division took up the positions south of the Red Cross Farm. For three days the men had been going without cooked rations, having only the iron rations in their haversacks to depend upon; and many of the boys, in the rush after the Hun, had thrown away all equipment except rifle and pistol ammunition, trench knives and shovels.

Even the mud and rain of the Bois de Trugny, exposed only to occasional shellfire, seemed like a real rest camp to the fellows who had taken part in the strenuous dash. I can well remember the morning that I saw John Ross, with all equipment gone, standing in the rain and remarking that he was " getting along all right," and relating the details of the push.

Time hung heavy those three wet days in Trugny wood, and pup-tents do not always shed the water. Yet after those first shock days in the line, a rest even under such miserable conditions, and in such mud, was welcome. Though it may be hard to summarize a doughboy's feel-

ings just then, perhaps the following paragraphs of a letter written in Trugny woods will help convey the right impression.

DEEP IN THE WOODS, SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE,
FRIDAY, JULY 26, 1918.

We've been to hell and back since I last wrote—to where men kill and slay and die, and perish under a withering fire; where there is nothing of hope and no sound more pleasant than bursting shrapnel, cries of "Gas!" and the rat-tat-tat of the machine gun. Lying crouched in a slit in the ground barely deep enough to permit my body to rest below the surface of the road, I spent the night of the 24th–25th in a wood a mile and a half from the German lines. That morning German machine gunners had whipped things to pieces with their devilish machinery; that same night our boys were in the line, giving hell for hell.

I said a little prayer as that shrapnel kept bursting. Three shells fell within six feet of each other just on the other side of the road. I grabbed my little Testament, the one you gave me years now gone, and read—John 14: 1, "Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me." Was I afraid? There is only one answer—a man who prays and fights, and keeps up the game spirit of an American soldier cannot afford to fear the outcome; he just prays for more courage, and it comes—comes with that grim determination of getting the Hun.

If you could picture what our brave fellows have seen, what they have done, how they have marched and bivouacked, tramped and entrenched—yes, and fought—since July 4th—with that damnable fire of artillery to contend with during the last week, you would know that every one of them is a hero deserving of warmest praise. Night after night we have moved; by day, we kept under cover—silent, swiftly marching columns of men; lumbering, creaking wagon trains; dodging shell-pitted roads, pushing through brush—but always on and on. Since Saturday last, the 20th, we have been on the trail of the retreating Hun.

The night of the 24th at 6 o'clock we entered Épieds, which had been recaptured in a short but bloody fight early in the morning. Two hours later we were caught in some of Jerry's shellfire as we ascended the hill. German signs, German shells, clothing, equipment, rifles and machine guns littered the road, showing the hastiness of retreat. In some places Hun dead lay unburied, and the stench of human flesh decaying beneath a warm sun was just part of war's hell, that's all.

Then that night there was no jesting. Fellows knew it was an even chance. Helpless we lay as those shells whistled, then stopped short and burst with a resounding crash; hopeful we were that they would miss us all; and the God of Battles was merciful to us that night. A man in the Supply Company was killed; that is the only casualty outside of the companies actually in the line of which I heard. Never can you picture in the quietude of security, and even in a wood like this, some three or four miles behind the lines and which was taken from the Teutons on the 23d, the feelings of a man as he nears the line and is subjected to heavy fire.

Some of our boys have fallen. Naturally, a grim war that knows nothing but the quick and the dead must take its toll. Would to God it could be otherwise! But we are here, safe to-day, and trusting for the morrow.

Clothes worn out in the last three weeks' campaigning and wear-and-tear have been replaced. To-day I have new shoes, trousers, slicker, shirt, underclothes, heavy socks, wrap leggings and an overseas cap—all new and clean, and fine, and so life seems all the more cheerful. We are relieved for a little while.

We marched by night yesterday, returning from the front line; we got here at 1.20 A.M. in this wood of ghosts and desolation; at 1.30 I was sound asleep and only a heavy fall of rain at 9 o'clock woke me up. For two days I have been digging shelters—everybody has; and so we are all soldiers now. I carry a shovel as part equipment and am glad to do it. It and my gun are pals.

That was the game when the morale and fighting strength of our division was undergoing its severe test.

On Sunday, the 28th, the long winding column of doughboys, plowing through the mud and fields, tramped from Trugny into position in the Fôret de Fère, in that corner known as Vente Jean Guillaume. That evening, as we carelessly crossed the big open field to the Red Cross Farm to fill our canteens, wounded were coming back from Fère-en-Tardenois; the battle was going at full tilt there, and some shells were even dropping near us. Three or four Germans lay unburied in the broad field. Not far away I picked up a packet of letters—they were addressed to an officer of the 167th Division, one of the Rainbow Division men who had fallen in the rush that took the Red Cross Farm and swept the Hun machine gun nests away. It was evident that the Yanks had taken the Red Cross Farm soon after the dash of our 2d Battalion, but had paid something for it in the lives of the brave Americans who assailed it.

Here, with the battle going on at Fère, five miles to the north, and at Le Charmel and other points to the east and northeast of us, we spent a " quiet " week, from that Sunday until the following Saturday evening, August 3d.

Pup-tents and dugouts were the rule in Vente Jean Guillaume; during the daytime men were cautioned to keep under cover, and at night no light whatever was permitted, and still throughout the day the main road a half kilo west of us, running from Jaulgonne to Fère, was a great artery of traffic, trucks and motorcycles

kicking up dust clouds all the way; but if they traveled in daylight, they took their chance—and they did.

With a German ammunition box for a desk, another for a seat, and still another for a waste-basket, we set up our office in front of a pup-tent; and when it rained we dragged the " office " inside and wrote orders under the most crowded conditions, sitting on the damp ground, and pounding away on the hard-worked Corona for all it was worth. It was worth a million then, for it stood the gaff well.

The 112th doughboys who spent that week in the edge of the Fôret de Fère are not soon to forget it, even though it was without great event. No entertainment of any kind was available during the entire time, and men grew restless. Water was scarce, and the allowance for one man each day was a canteenful. On that he drank, washed and shaved now and then; under such conditions as these, despite occasional inclement weather, the morale of the regiment surely was master of the occasion and a thing to be admired.

And in the light of events that were to follow, with the death of some of the boys in the advance to the Vesle River, one is not apt to overlook the appeal and significance of two stirring semi-religious meetings held by Chaplain Mann and Rev. Wilson, of Reno, Nev., the latter in the Y. M. C. A. service, on the evening of July 31st. It was Wednesday—" prayer-meeting " night; but it wasn't a mere prayer-meeting crowd that attended. Every doughboy who possibly could get away

from his routine duties was on hand. Rough-looking, clean-cut, burly-built, husky, devil-may-care fellows; they all were there. Officers helped out in the singing, with only one crumpled song book available for a crowd of several hundred. A top sergeant got up and proclaimed that he had cut out swearing (a record for any sergeant in "this man's army") and he called upon the men of his own outfit to see the game through to a finish. Prosaic as this mere description may sound, it had the punch. Each man arose and gave his promise.

Those fellows sang such selections as "Keep the Home Fires Burning," "God Will Take Care of You," "Rock of Ages," "Jesus, Lover of My Soul" and others. About the time the chorus of the first was reached, Jerry shells began whistling and creasing the clouds overhead; but those fellows sang on just the same. There were many fellows there I knew, and two weeks later the game of war had sent some of them into No Man's Land for the last time; others had been sent to the rear with bits of shell in arms and legs; and still others were playing the game with the rest of the doughboys. Some little Massachusetts soldier, himself bumped off by a shell, wrote in a letter that was picked up by one of our boys: "You can tell the folks that more fellows are converted over here by shellfire than ever hit Billy Sunday's sawdust trail."

He said a great deal; and days afterward, noticing the change that came over men who had been into the thick of things, one could easily see there was a great

truth in the little Yankee's statement. I wish I had known that youngster's name; I'd like to have written his parents an appreciation of the effect that one bit of news had upon the boys there at Vente Jean Guillaume.

The following day Colonel Rickards personally dictated a lettter to the enlisted men of the regiment, copies of which were sent to each company, commenting on the situation within the woods and urging the coöperation of men and officers alike to maintain the high standard of discipline for which the organization had been noted. That memorandum, entitled "Personal Appearance and Conduct, and Care of Equipment," and addressed to the "Enlisted Men of the 112th Infantry," follows:

Nothing so marks the true soldier as his personal appearance and military bearing. It is a small matter for everyone to retain neat and clean appearance in camp and barracks, but the real test comes under such trying circumstances as we are now experiencing. The lack of all conveniences and scarcity of water call upon the superior senses, and the one who may overcome these obstacles demonstrates his ability to face all conditions and proves him a true soldier.

One hour each morning has been set aside, to be devoted by the individual to the proper care of his person and clothing. Advantage will be taken of this period to shave, brush the clothing, clean shoes and air bedding. Another period, from 2 to 3 o'clock, is given over to the care of arms and equipment, and must be fully employed for this purpose.

Sanitation is of more than usual importance while bivouacked in woods, as we now are, and the closest attention must be given it, to preserve health and strength. On the efforts of each individual depends the health of the men, and the carelessness of one man may be the cause of infection of hundreds.

The Commanding Officer has faith in the enlisted personnel of the 112th to meet all conditions in which they may be thrown. He asks that each one consider himself as an indispensable part of the organization, that by keeping a cheerful spirit, giving close attention to all his duties, hygiene, sanitation, military courtesies, soldierly decorum and bearing, the regiment may enjoy an honorable place in the Keystone Division, whose training and fitness we have all worked so hard to attain, and which as an organization is among the best in the service. We have a big part to play in the maintenance of efficiency, and none, from private to Colonel, can afford to neglect any opportunity that may tend to better it.

CHAPTER XI

INTO ACTION ALONG THE VESLE

Standing Five Hours in a Cold Rain at Chamery —Relieving the 32nd Division on the Vesle—Third Battalion First to Cross the Stream at Grand Savart—Into Fismette Later—"Rest Days" at Dravegny.

With the fall of Fère-en-Tardenois, the great Hun base midway between the Marne and the Vesle, orders came in a twinkling for the 28th Division to take up the pursuit. At 5 o'clock Saturday evening, August 3d, Colonel Rickards called the battalion commanders in hurried conference, and gave out the verbal instructions for the new movement north; at 5.20 enlisted men were gulping down their last mess in Vente Jean Guillaume; at 5.50 the head of the column was swinging its way over the open field to the Jaulgonne-Fère-en-Tardenois highway within sight of the Red Cross Farm, scene of the bloody battle of ten days past.

Red Cross workers at the Farm passed out chocolate and tobacco as the doughboys trudged north again, just as in Château-Thierry the Y. M. C. A., the night we passed through, had proved it was on the job. It was a march of twelve miles that night over roads ankle-deep with mud, through woods filled with gas, shells and decaying horse-flesh, not to omit mention of some Huns that had not yet been given burial. It was the roughest hike the regiment had undertaken up until that time.

Roads became jammed early in the evening, and often two lines of infantry were proceeding in the same direction, becoming confused when a long truck train intervened. The route after Jerry was via Fresnes, Courmont, Cierges, Chamery, Coulonges, Cohan and Dravegny for the 112th Regiment; but when the Headquarters Company and the 1st Battalion got separated from the other regimental units in the jam and rain and darkness of the night, that part of the column came to a standstill at 1.30 in the morning, just outside of Chamery, the little town in which Quentin Roosevelt was buried. At that time the rain was so heavy that half of the devastated village was under water, and in places the boys waded through temporary ponds up to their knees.

For five hours we stood in the coldest rain I have ever known, packs seemingly weighing a ton, and water-soaked; slickers proving little better than a rag; our clothes and shoes wet to the skin; not a shelter nearer than Chamery and its blown-to-bits buildings—and not an officer, sad to relate, who had the initiative at that time to order the column to retrace its steps for a short distance, and seek what shelter it could find in shell-hit buildings. As it was, that shivering column of men, with few exceptions, stood in the mud and water with the rain beating in their faces, for five solid hours. Then, long after daylight came, when it was definitely established that the remainder of the regiment had moved on to Dravegny, the battalion and the Headquarters Com-

pany crept back into Chamery at 6.30, filtered into buildings here and there, built fires indoors or outside under barn roofs, and the men sought to dry their clothes and snatch some sleep at the same time. At 11 we ate something that the kitchen had to offer—warm slum, bread and steaming coffee—the best old meal we had struck in many a day, it seemed!

That same afternoon (August 4th—and it was Sunday, too), refreshed by a few hours' sleep, and our clothes rapidly drying in the warm sun that chased the rain clouds away, we were on the march again, passing through Cohan, and then through Dravegny, ducking for overhead shells as we marched into position in the woods on Hill 210, northwest of Dravegny, into a section of the Bois Chénet. There, tired out from a night on the march, and wearied by the additional kilos of Sunday afternoon, the men of the last contingent to get into position " flopped " for a second time that day of August 4th. In mid-afternoon General Weigel, commanding the 56th Brigade, arrived with orders that immediately sent one battalion, the second, Companies L and M, two companies of the 109th Machine Gun Battalion and one company of the 103d Engineers in the direction of Mont St. Martin, with the P. C. of the advance guard commander, Captain Phelps, at Resson Fme. This was the 56th's advance guard in the thrust north.

Those units of the 112th which remained on Hill 210 that night rested, slept and fed up. Kitchens worked overtime in providing a substantial menu that made the

fellows forget for a little time at least the hard hike just completed. Anent that stay overnight, the little book records:

A sumptuous supper was served by the Headquarters Company at 8.30, and it surely did credit to the organization. We fellows pitched one of the long, or double, pup tents, and then slept like tops.

Paris papers arriving to-night told of the 8300 Germans that had been taken in the rush through this sector, and that the enemy's forces were back to the Vesle by this time.

Surpassing in grandeur even the view from Lookout Point at River Ridge, this hill, which had been captured from the Hun only twenty-four hours before, permitted the observer to see 15 to 18 miles in any direction. It reminded many a soldier boy of Lookout Mountain, and while I have never been there, I can readily imagine that the comparison was truly worth while. You could see a number of French villages, ones through which we had passed during the night and the afternoon, and these were nestled in one of the broad valleys to our left.

We slept that night, as only tired soldiers can sleep; the big guns were farther up the line, but even the noise of them did not prevent us from catching up with the hours of rest we had missed, and it was after 8 o'clock when we got up in the morning. Then we had a hearty breakfast, washed and shaved on a half canteen of water, and felt as happy as a youngster who had a new suit of clothes, even though ours were still covered with the mud splatter of the previous night's hike.

At noon we were on the march again, and at 1.15 our headquarters was established at Les Bouleaux Farm, a kilo southeast of Chéry Chartreuve, and some five kilos south of the Vesle River. The four companies of our 2d Battalion, with L and M of the 3d, were at La Près and Resson Farms, south of Mont St. Martin, where

their movement had been arrested shortly after their get-away the previous night. Other units of the regiment, including the Headquarters and Supply Companies, moved into position in the valley south and southeast of Chéry Chartreuve, known to the French as Fond de Mezières but more generally known, after a few days' residence in that hot territory, as "Death Valley." Shellfire grew too heavy for the advance guard, and its purpose having been accomplished, it was withdrawn to the valley south of Chéry, there to await further orders.

French engineers, with a liberal supply of pontoons on wagons, were also encamped in the hollow by the night of the 5th. They were awaiting the critical moment to cross the Vesle River, an opportunity that was to come soon.

That night in the mud and rain, and under the most disagreeable circumstances, we watched big tractors pull the American artillery into position—our own artillery, in fact, which had come direct from the firing ranges of southern France. The big tractors pulled the big guns through the mud, and surmounted almost discouraging obstacles. That night we heard an American barrage going over the Vesle, and we knew then that our own guns were in their hastily arranged emplacements in "Death Valley." There was a distinct, indescribable comfort in the very thought that our own artillery, which we had not seen for months, was on the job and ready to support our fellows. Shells were falling in Fismette

REMARKABLE AERIAL PHOTO OF FISMES AND FISMETTE

This picture, taken in August, 1917, a year before the 112th reached the Vesle, indicates, better than words or maps can describe, the beauty and exact location of the Vesle River towns

and along the Vesle—places where own own boys were to advance under heavy fire on August 7th.

And so the stage was set for one of the most hotly contested battles of the war; the Germans brought to bay on the Vesle and the 28th Division moving to relieve the 32d, then in the front line at Fismes. Colonel Rickards, in his official report, tells of this relief:

Tuesday evening, August 6, orders were received to relieve the 125th and 126th Infantries by the 112th Infantry and the 109th Machine Gun Battalion, in the advance line south of Fismes. The movement was started at 10 o'clock; the night dark, raining hard, mud deep and the roads congested with troops and transportation moving and standing. I personally arrived at the P. C. of the C. O. 126th Infantry at 1.20 A.M., but found no officers there except the Intelligence Officer of the 125th Infantry, who informed me that the commanding officers of the two regiments I was to relieve had departed earlier in the evening. Owing to the lack of officers on duty with the troops to be relieved, some difficulty was experienced in providing guides to conduct the several units to their stations.

The 2d Bn., Captain Phelps commanding, was sent to the town of Fismes. The 3d Bn. was conducted by an officer of the 126th Infantry to Les Grands Marais, which is west of the sector designated for this regiment. The 1st Bn., with the Machine Gun Co. and Hq. Co., less one-pounder platoon, was held in reserve; one company 109th Machine Gun Bn., less one platoon, was posted on the high ground in Bois de Larribonnet. Another at En Bionne. The P. C. of the 2d Bn. was at Chezelles, 3d Bn. in the ravine southeast of Le Moneel, the 1st Bn. and the Regimental Headquarters at the intersection of the Dravegny-Fismes-Mont St. Martin roads. The relief of the two regiments was completed about 3.30 A.M.

Reconnaissance made during the early morning developed that the river at these points averaged from 20 to 35 feet wide, 4 to 6 feet deep, mud bottom, marshy approaches, with wire entanglements

in bottom of river and on the banks, making it impossible, of course, to cross except over the ruined bridge connecting Fismes and Fismette. A small bridge was constructed by the pioneer platoon of the regiment at Le Grand Savart. Bois du Diable, Les Grands Bois, la Gravette, to and including Fismette, were filled with enemy troops, armed principally with machine guns.

During the day (August 7) a quiet hunt was made for snipers and machine gun nests, which not only familiarized the troops with the surrounding terrain, but which succeeded in cleaning out many of these nests. The work of machine guns and snipers in the village of Fismette became very aggravating. The Major-General visited my post, and it was decided that a barrage would be put on at 7 o'clock in the evening, and accordingly preparations for an attack on the place were made.

Fismes had been taken by American forces during the night of August 4th and 5th, but German machine-gun snipers, holding Fismette in force and the woods that lined the north bank of the stream to the west, made things warm in the captured city. Shells, exploding in the narrow streets or along once beautiful avenues, hour after hour sent stone and dirt into the air, adding devastation to the wreckage already resulting from the heavy shellfire.

Things moved swiftly that night of the 6th and 7th. Our forces all had moved forward. The pioneer platoon of the Headquarters Company, working feverishly in the dark, had built a foot bridge six feet wide, and this was swung into position as machine-gun snipers and one-pounders tried to wreck the woods and kill the fellows who were setting the stage for a crossing of the Vesle on the night of the 7th. Trees had been cut and thrown

across the river, but crossings on these were made almost impossible, due to the activity of the German machine gunners.

So hot was the fighting and shellfire in the Fismes sector and along the Vesle that in one small patch of woods, where the pioneer platoon was located, a dozen fallen American soldiers lay unburied. The stench of decaying flesh, of gas-infested woods and of exploding shells was ofttimes sickening; it was a matter of using a dugout every minute of the day when shells were whistling, crashing and resounding through the woods or in the town itself.

Beginning at 7 o'clock the night of the 7th, with our artillery putting over one of the most severe barrages we had ever listened to, with the sky that night brightly illumined by a thousand barking guns—it seemed that many, at least—the advance of the 112th Infantry went forward with a rush. The 2d and 3d Battalions made the attack on the enemy's front; and the 3d succeeded in getting three companies across the river to the west of Fismes—at Le Grand Savart, two kilos from the city. Simultaneously, three companies of the 1st Battalion took up a position in the town itself.

During the early morning of the 8th, with the barrage having done its full duty, our fellows tore across the old stone and a new foot bridge and entered Fismette and fought their way, yard by yard, through streets that were swept by enemy machine gun fire. They were the brave fellows of the 1st and 2d Battalions; naturally,

under such heavy fire, all the men could not go unscathed. Shells were covering every patch of ground on the south side of the river for an area of at least ten square miles; shellfire claimed many, gas got a number, and the machine gun fire of the Huns mowed down some of the valiant crew that started through the hell of it into Fismette.

Of this night of real fighting along the Vesle, the 112th's commander had this to say in his report of a few days later:

The preparatory fire was opened at 6.45, and continued until 7 o'clock, when the barrage was moved. It was my understanding that this assault was to be general in the three divisions, and as the barrage moved, my troops moved with it. They succeeded in gaining the village of Fismette, but as the troops on my right and left did not go forward, it was necessary for us to withdraw to the south side of the river again.

The 3d Bn. at this time crossed to the north side of the river in the Grand Savart on the narrow bridge which had been constructed by the pioneer platoon of the regiment. They met strong opposition from machine gun fire and snipers in the Château du Diable, but gained some ground and held it.

About 12 o'clock I consulted with Captain Phelps and Captain Miller, the latter having been sent forward to support Captain Phelps during the advance, at 7 P.M., and it was decided to again try to advance and take the village of Fismette. I called the Major-General, and got his consent, and arranged for an attack, and for the artillery fire to precede the advance. This fire was opened at 4 A.M. and was continued for one hour, when we again crossed to the north side of the river, but were compelled to return. At 11 o'clock in the morning a bombardment of the village was started, and continued stationary until 1.30 P.M. and then rolled forward, the troops following the barrage and Companies F, H and

G entered the village, where heavy fighting took place, which resulted in our getting a foothold, giving us some munitions and about 40 prisoners.

During that night and the following day, the hills and country west, north and east of Fismette were shelled in an effort to dislodge machine gun nests. This was only partially successful. During the day a number of machine guns were cleaned out by the fire of our own machine guns, and 37 mm. guns; and a number of prisoners were taken. Altogether, about 60 prisoners were taken, and it is believed from conservative estimates that not less than 350 of the enemy were killed and countless numbers wounded.

A number of minor counter-attacks were made by the enemy, but with the exception of two made against the right flank and one on the left, they amounted to nothing. All were repulsed with loss to the enemy.

It is to be noted that the 3d Battalion was the first to cross the Vesle, at the Grand Savart; that three attempts were made to take Fismette; with the third, on the afternoon of August 8th, being successful, though costly. Fighting from one wall to another, from house to house, and popping grenades whenever the chance offered, the 2d Battalion got a real taste of hand-to-hand fighting that memorable afternoon, but when the day ended Fismette was in the possession of the 112th Infantry.

There was a machine gun nest everywhere along that creek-like river, and each was so persistently active that the boys who held the American fighting line at that point were on the jump every minute. Patrols were the order, not of the day, but of the hour.

Meanwhile, the German aviators were doing their

best to get the range of the positions occupied by our troops. From dawn until sunset they were active; south of Chéry Chartreuve, above which they hovered many times a day, they maneuvered, and finally, in one great dash, succeeded in bringing down one observation balloon belonging to the Americans. The gray machines, flying low, passed right over the stone building in which the rear P.C. was located, at Les Bouleaux, while men with rifles, the anti-aircraft guns on the hillside near us and machine guns mounted on wheels pumped away at them. On the evening of the 7th, after this successful afternoon raid, they attempted to come across again, but our Archie barrage was too strong for them, and they were driven off.

During the memorable night of August 7th–8th the Germans rained shells into the valley and slopes south of Chéry Chartreuve. It was here that the Headquarters Company had been located; the Supply Company was still in position there, too. Luther Shive was instantly killed not far from the " dump " as he and a companion stood outside their dugout; the pal standing by his side was hit in the leg by shrapnel, being wounded in three places.

The Huns rained gas and H. E. shells in the valley most of the night; there was one gas alarm after another, and to us it seemed surprising that our fellows, under such a terrific barrage, did not " click it " more heavily; but we were thankful when the night was over, and both barrages lifted for awhile.

The "hell of it" at Épieds was hardly in it with what our fellows went through during that period at Fismes and Fismette, and which continued until August 10th, when all our units took up positions to the south of Chéry Chartreuve again, the 111th taking our places at Fismette, Fismes and along the Vesle.

Word came down on the morning of the 9th that our boys had taken their first German prisoners.

One company alone got 57, surrounding a house in Fismette, after a sharp battle. Thirty-four in the first batch were started on their way, but some got caught in a gas attack and others in shellfire—and so not all of them reached their destination behind the lines. The enemy kept up a heavy shelling during the afternoon and evening of the 9th, some of the shells falling close to our Headquarters at Les Bouleaux Farm. And for heavy shellfire, Saturday, August 10th, was a repetition.

In the closing paragraph of his report on the first action at Fismes, Fismette and about the Vesle, Colonel Rickards indicated the toll that German artillery and machine-gun fire had taken. The report read:

> Of our own men, there were killed 41, wounded 168, gassed 128, missing 59; casualties—officers 12, men 396. There are for duty 67 officers and 2763 men. The regiment was relieved about midnight of Friday, August 9; some units, however, were not relieved until 4 A.M., August 10. Relief was effected by the 111th Infantry.
>
> The operation covered a period of eighty hours, during which time some officers took no sleep whatever, and worked continuously throughout. It is regretted that the proper support on our flanks

was not given. Had it been, it is my opinion that our original objective would have been reached, and the possession of the plateau gained.

It is unusual, perhaps, to call special attention to acts of plain duty, but I wish to take this opportunity to express my satisfaction of the manner in which officers and men alike performed their duties and carried out the orders and directions given them.

Though he did not say it, Colonel Rickards himself was the officer who remained on constant duty for a period of eighty hours, and his battalion commanders—then Captains Harry F. Miller, Lucius M. Phelps and Fred McCoy—were almost as busy; and each of the three was recommended for promotion to Major in the final paragraph of his official summary—promotions, however, which came long afterward, when the action at Fismes was all but a memory.

Naturally, there were more detailed reports from the battalion commanders, and one of the most interesting perhaps is that of Captain McCoy, who explained how the men of the 3d Battalion cut their way through heavy wire, forged ahead despite heavy fire from the Devil's Château, and held the ground gained on the north bank of the Vesle. The report ran:

1. On the night of August 6th this battalion relieved a battalion of the 126th Infantry, completing relief about 4.00 A.M., August 7th. The position taken up was along the railroad, about 300 yards south of the Vesle, and about 1½ kilos west of Fismes. This position was occupied until 12.30 M., August 7th.

2. At 11.45 A.M., August 7th, I received an order to cross the Vesle River immediately, being supported by one company of machine guns and one platoon of one-pounders. The order was given

to Companies L and M to advance at 12.30, being supported by Companies I and K. The advance started at the hour designated. As soon as our advance started, because of enemy observation, we were subjected to very heavy barrage, but the companies advanced in artillery formation and went ahead through the barrage, two companies crossing the Vesle on logs which had been cut and thrown across, forming foot bridges. This river was lined very heavily with barbed wire on both sides, which had to be cut. After crossing, Co. L and Co. M advanced through woods about 200 yards, where they were forced to dig in by heavy machine gun fire from the front and right flank. Company I crossed a little later, moving to position on right flank of the other two companies. Company K being held on this side of the Vesle in support and the movement forward was held up. This position was occupied until the morning of the 8th, when by using combat patrols an advance was attempted. We advanced 200 yards to an embankment on the railroad south of Château du Diable, from which position we were forced to fall back about 35 yards, owing to the fact that the Germans were entrenched in a railroad embankment on the north side of the railroad, using potato mashers and grenades, and heavy machine guns placed stationary on embankment and worked with wires. On the evening of the 8th, Company K crossed the Vesle and took up an entrenched position on the north side of same, still in support of the other three companies. This position was held by the battalion until our relief on the night of August 9th.

3. We were subject all the time to a very harassing machine gun fire from front and right flank from nests and snipers. We were able to account for quite a few snipers by sniping ourselves.

4. The enemy tried three counter-attacks on our right flank on August 9th, between the hours of 12.00 M. and 7.00 P.M.

5. Our work was handicapped through shortage of rifle grenades, tromblons and hand grenades, some of which were received August 9th.

6. During our advance across the Vesle one platoon of one-pounders did very effective work on Château du Diable, in which

were enemy machine guns. Night of August 9th–10th we were relieved by 2d Battalion of the 111th Infantry.

7. Company A moved up and took up position on south side of Vesle River when K Company moved across the river, and established liaison by patrolling with the 1st Battalion on the south bank of the Vesle. We were in contact with the 59th Infantry on our left.

But Captain McCoy failed to mention that had the troops on his left flank moved forward at the time his own men crossed the river, undoubtedly the Vesle River bridgehead would have been so enlarged that the plateau behind Fismette would have been taken and held, paving the way for a good start toward the Aisne River. The story of the failure of flank troops to move forward when necessity demanded, or even when occasion offered, proved costly to the 112th later that month—an event that was foreseen and predicted, and which the 112th's commander sought to avert by appealing not only to Division but to Army Headquarters as well. But then that is a story which will be told in its turn.

The important feature to remember in connection with the Vesle River action is that the 112th Infantry was the first unit, not only of the 28th Division, but of any division fighting along that sector during the drive, to gain a foothold on the north bank of the stream. Claims of other units which came into action after the relief was effected are not borne out by the facts; all but a small portion of Fismette was in the 112th's possession when it was turned over to the 111th Infantry, the sister regiment of the 56th Brigade, during August 9th and

10th; the 111th in turn was relieved by a unit of the 55th Brigade, and when the 112th again appeared on the scene, August 18th, completing the relief of the 109th at 4 on the morning of the 19th, it found that only a comparatively small section of Fismette was left in American hands. But the whole story of Fismette is a chapter in itself, and so these details will be deferred for a short while.

The shellfire for those first few days on the Vesle, characterized by Colonel Rickards as "the most severe that any army had seen up until that time, in point of concentration," continued only intermittently after the 8th. Now and then "Death Valley" would get its daily strafing, and those who had rushed into the mess-line without steel helmets would hustle back to dug-outs on the hillside until the shelling was over.

On Saturday, when the doughboys of the 112th filtered back to the old positions south of Chery, and took up their residence in the valley again, it seemed a real haven of relief to be away from that searching fire which claimed its toll not only at Fismes, Fismette and on the Vesle, but at Resson Fme., about Mont St. Martin and at other points in the area between the river and the little town on the hill.

Then on the most beautiful Sunday we had seen for some time near the battle-front, that of August 11th—one Sunday that we were not on the march in France—the Hun spread death and devastation in the Fond de

Mezières. Well did it earn its title of "Death Valley" that afternoon!

At 4 o'clock the Germans blew up a big American ammunition dump of 75s just north of Chéry. Then, while shells were alighting around our own Headquarters, others fell in the valley. In forty-five minutes horses, men and wagons were blown to pieces. Every yard of ground seemed covered by the enemy fire. Three men were killed and more than 50 wounded; they were of the 2d and 3d Battalions. One artilleryman, scrambling up a slope to escape the fire, was caught by a shell and disappeared in a mountain of dirt—blown to atoms.

Surely this was one of the saddest days of all; there were not enough ambulances available to carry the wounded away, and men were loaded into carts and wagons; everybody in the section volunteered as stretcher-bearers; officers' nerves, after witnessing such a slaughter before their eyes, were badly shattered. Even the dugouts of the hillside offered but little protection; some groups of men were trapped when shells made direct hits. Yet this reign of shell terror could not daunt the spirit of our boys; it only heightened their ambition to get another slap at the Germans.

One captain of Infantry, so overcome by the sight of his own men being mowed down as he looked on helpless from a mere funkhole in the hillside, collapsed and cried like a baby, unable to control his feelings. Mules and horses suffered greatly, and some that were not killed outright had to be shot later in order to relieve

FISMES AND FISMETTE ON AUGUST 21, 1918

Indicating the ravages of shellfire. Note the broken buildings and the hundreds of shell holes. Fismette is in the upper left-hand corner, and the bridge can be plainly seen

WRECKED CITY HALL OF FISMES

As it looked September 5th. During the stay of the 112th in the city, men saw this beautiful building cut down by shellfire from day to day, until it was a crumbling mass of ruins

their suffering. Jerry aeroplanes, more active than ever on that afternoon, were blamed for this Sunday catastrophe.

The 112th commander lost no time in taking immediate steps to prevent a recurrence, and the following messages, taken verbatim from his notebook, indicate that he was aware of the seriousness of the situation and was willing to do everything possible to safeguard the welfare of his men. The first read:

11 August, 1918.

Capt. Phelps:

I have taken up the question of moving the regiment to some point from which it can get better cover. What is your opinion of it?

Do you think that you could make the men safe where they are if we move the supply trains away from the place?

I am in hope that the whole division will be moved back in a day or two, but if this thing keeps up we will have no one to move.

I am taking up the same question with the Division Commander, in the hope that I can get him and others in authority to see the necessity of giving these men a rest and reorganizing the division.

Let me know what you, Miller, McCoy, Rhone and Ziegler think of moving. It can't be far, and I doubt the wisdom of a move until we can get clear out of this neck of the woods.

Rickards.

His message to the Division Commander was as follows:

Hqrs. 112th Inf., 56th Brg.,
11 August, 1918.

General:

The fire from the enemy H. A. has been playing the deuce with the troops and transportation of this regiment.

As you know, there is no cover for either at the place where

they are now quartered. There have been not less than 50 men hurt to-day and 12 or 14 animals killed.

There is no doubt but that the fire is intended for the H. A. we have in the valley, and so long as it is there we must expect the fire of the enemy.

In this connection I would earnestly urge the removal from this locality to one of a more quiet condition in order that the men of the division may recover from the service of the past six weeks. They have undergone hardships and losses. The regimental, battalion and company organizations are broken. Platoons are in command of sergeants and corporals, companies in command of lieutenants and battalions in command of captains.

I fear that unless we soon begin this reorganization, much of the efficiency of the division will be lost to us. It is my belief that we can better afford to lose time now and maintain our efficiency than to let it go over until all our hard work of the past twelve months shall be lost.

Pardon me for taking this liberty, but I assure you that it is only through my deep interest for and concern in the Keystone Division that I am prompted to express my thoughts on the subject, which I know does not properly belong to me.

Yours,

RICKARDS.

The following day the 111th Infantry was having a tough time of it in the area which the 112th had turned over to it three days before. Lieut. William J. Robinson, aide to General Weigel, telephoned from 56th Brigade Headquarters: "You will assemble your best battalion, together with your machine-gun company, trench mortars and 37 mm. platoon, and hold them in readiness to move forward to support the 111th Infantry." And Colonel Rickards lost no time in sending the following

messages in his own handwriting, prepared for any eventuality:

12 AUGUST, 1918, 8.05 A.M.

CAPT. MILLER:

You will assemble your bn. and be ready to move at the earliest possible moment.

The Machine Gun Co., one-pounder platoon and the trench mortar platoon will report to you.

As soon as you are ready send a runner to tell me the number of men you have in each unit.

You will move out the Fismes Road to C. O., 111th Inf., at his command post, where the P. C. of the 112th was located.

RICKARDS.

12 AUGUST, 1918.

CAPT. RHONE:

Report with your M. G. Co. to Capt. Miller at once.

RICKARDS,
Colonel.

12 AUGUST, 1918, 8.35 A.M.

CAPT. MILLER:

It is reported that the 111th are unable to hold their position, and that we will have to support them. You already have orders to assemble your bn. It will be necessary to act promptly, but you will *not* move until I give you the word to march.

The one-pounder platoon of the Hdq. Co., trench mortar platoon and Machine Gun Co. have had orders to report to you. As soon as you have departed (if you do) I will have another bn. ready to follow and support you, if needed.

Do not take officers or men with you who are not physically able to meet the requirements. They will only be in the way and a drawback to others. Better you have a hundred good men to the company than to have it encumbered with weaklings.

Let me know as soon as you are ready, and the number of men you have. *But don't leave until I give you the word.*

You *will not* take any transportation with you except ammunition carts.

RICKARDS,
Colonel.

Regarding the same situation, indicating that there was improvement as the hours passed, the following messages are copied from the same book:

12 AUGUST, 1918, 9.45 A.M.

CAPT. MCCOY:

Comdg. 3d Bn., 112th Inf.:

You will at once take proper measures to assemble your bn. upon notice from me. You can pass the word now and company commanders make their plans to assemble by platoons, should shelling be heavy at the time of assembly.

Be very careful of the men. Do not expose them until it is necessary. BUT BE READY TO GO WHEN YOU GET THE WORD.

RICKARDS,
Colonel.

DEAR SHANNON:

I am doing all that it is possible with my broken forces to help you out. My Machine Gun Company is in bad shape. They had a number of guns knocked out in the last action, lost 3 men and 20 horses yesterday during the heavy shelling.

My 37 mm. platoon is all knocked up and does not amount to much. Trench mortar is in fair condition, but is of little use in this kind of work. The companies only average about 100 men who can be of any use.

I have a bn. of about —— officers and —— enlisted men, with the M. G. Co., T. M. and 37 mm. platoons ready to go to your sup-

port as soon as the General directs it. I will have another bn. ready to follow this one if needed.

Captain Harry F. Miller is the comdg. officer of the first support I will send you.

Keep me informed of your situation, and I will do all that it is possible for me in my depleted condition to help you.

I believe that the Boche is covering his getaway this morning, and that we will have to follow him to-night to keep in contact with him.

RICKARDS.

12 AUGUST, 1918, 9.40 A.M.

CAPT. MILLER:

Keep your command in hand, but not assembled. Let them go to their dugouts, and wait further orders.

This includes the M. G. Co. and other units.

RICKARDS,
Colonel.

12 AUGUST, 1918, 6.30 P.M.

TO CAPTAINS PHELPS,
MILLER,
MCCOY,
RHONE,
ZIEGLER,

I am worrying about the absence of the enemy fire. I fear that the men will get careless and gather in bunches and that the enemy will open with a burst of fire that may be disastrous. Look to this and see that the men keep under cover.

RICKARDS,
Colonel.

A temporary relief from shellfire worries came later that day; it was evident that the plea of the day previous for a safer area for the reserve elements had had its

effect, for Division Headquarters ordered that the 112th take up a position in the Dravegny area, more than three kilos south of the Chéry positions. The 2d Battalion and Machine Gun Company were ordered to bivouac near Longville; 1st Battalion and Headquarters Company near Fond de Gloriette; and the 3d Battalion at La Moulinet—all lying east and northeast of the town of Dravegny itself, and not more than a kilometer from old Hill 210, scene of the bivouac on August 4th.

The movement began at 4 on the morning of August 13th, and the Supply Company had barely pulled out of the valley south of Chéry when Jerry let loose, blew up the bridge and some dugouts along the small stream where the rolling kitchen and part of the wagon train stood, and raised general confusion; the other units of the regiment were already on their way, and Jerry's strafing early that morning went for nothing.

"As soon as possible after arriving in place," the Field Order said, "men will dig in *deep,* and every care taken to conceal animals and transportation."

This was followed to the letter.

Then Colonel Rickards immediately issued General Orders 9, announcing establishment of headquarters in the extreme southern limits of Dravegny, and adding this appreciation:

> The Commanding Officer of the regiment takes this occasion to express the gratification of the manner in which officers and men have performed their duties in the past. You have all been tried, and to his knowledge, none have been found who have not fulfilled the obligations of the true soldier. Many have excelled in acts of

bravery and have given a proud name and place to the 112th Infantry.

You have not disappointed our friends, the citizens of that grand old Keystone State who have a faith in the 28th Division that no obstacle is too great for it to surmount. To keep this good opinion, to maintain our efficiency as companies, battalions, regiments, brigades and a division, will call upon the best efforts of every individual. Discipline is the keynote of success. The Commanding Officer believes that each will respond, and has a confidence in his organization that it will win still greater honor in the part it is yet to play in bringing the most infamous monarch to the humble position of crying for mercy.

Until orders came for the regiment to go into the line again, on the night of August 18th, the men drilled and "rested," as circumstances would permit, in the Dravegny area. New clothes were issued to those whose uniforms had been ripped and torn in battle; men were marched to an old chocolate factory near Abbaye d'Igny, three miles away, to get baths—the first in a long time—while other boys doffed their clothes at the side of a woodland stream and jumped into the cold water.

Several nights Hun bombing planes came over, but their missiles fell in areas not occupied by our troops, and so did little damage. The only mishap occurring during the period was the collapse of a Machine Gun Company dugout in which five men were injured, one later dying. On August 17th the outfit received more than a hundred replacements, draftees from Camp Lee who had been in the service only since May 19th.

Had it not been for such a rest as Dravegny provided, despite the riff-raff of battle that had to be cleared

away, and foul odors that still clung to damaged barracks and broken buildings, the overwrought nerves of many a doughboy who went through the testing fire at Fismes and Fismette would have snapped before he had another chance at the Hun in the front line.

Once in an area where only occasional shells came to greet him as the days went by, instead of several hundred in an hour or so, he had time to think over the events of the past two weeks, to recall the loss of those pals, to swap stories with the men of other units and then to try, but not succeed, in forgetting the toll that war took.

There was a bright side to the Dravegny "rest" period, and the literature, recent magazines from the States, and cakes of chocolate which the Red Cross gave out day after day, went far to while away what few idle hours the enlisted man had. Five days isn't a very long rest, but it helped put the men in fettle for another siege of the game. I hardly believe that Colonel Rickards was ever prouder of his men than just at that time, unless it was on the day that the *Pocahontas* docked at Philadelphia, and the homecoming troops debarked; but the war game was so ever-present that we had few thoughts of returning to the U. S. A. then. Yet we looked for mail, day to day, just as eagerly as we ever had.

The doughboy will have fun no matter where he goes, and it was never truer than right there in Dravegny. The office personnel, runners and men on duty about Regimental Headquarters got up a mess of their own in one of the tumble-down barracks, appointed Color Sergeant Miles Shoup as mess sergeant, and allowed "Pat"

Doyle, of Huntingdon, to be general overseer. "Pat" managed things well, and the first of his duties was to post the following rules in a conspicuous place. They ran something like this:

112TH HUT RULES.

1. Give a helping hand.
2. Don't throw waste paper or cigarette butts on the floor.
3. Be clean and sanitary.
4. Help carry water and chop wood.
5. Be a volunteer.
6. No lights after 8.45 P.M.
7. Stay out of the kitchen.
8. Use your head.
9. Help one another, and be a regular soldier.
10. Don't swear; use your energy for strafing the Hun.
11. Air your blankets and keep your bunk tidy.
12. Register before eating.
13. If you don't belong here, *move*. Don't goldbrick.
14. Work like ——— and be happy.
15. Now don't forget to help carry water and chop wood, for the boys at the front need the eats, and the cooks are doing their bit—*are you?*

Strewn about this same barracks were the remnants of a German retreat—clothing, Hun helmets, belts and litter of all kinds. This was cleared away, the chicken-wire bunks made fairly comfortable, and the dirt floor kept scrupulously clean. As to Doyle's rule about "no lights" after dark, that was entirely unnecessary. Even cigarettes were banned, and there were sufficient visits of Hun bombing planes to nearby areas, particularly at Cohan and Courmont, to induce any doughboy to observe the army regulations to the letter.

Life, after all, in Dravegny wasn't such an unpleas-

ant siege. French civilians began moving back into the old houses, wrecked and ruined, long before shells ceased to fall within their gardens. But that was France and its war zone.

Side by side in the little church cemetery in the heart of the town slept German, French and American soldiers, each cross plainly marked with the characteristic lettering of the army to which the fallen heroes belonged. The wreck of war had not been entirely cleared away from the little town when the summons to duty on the Vesle came again; but it was answered promptly. Dravegny and its pathetic quietude were forgotten in the days to follow.

Meanwhile, the Red Cross outpost station there continued to be a haven for the youngster who wanted cigarettes, canned goods, and books to read; and in the days that followed it was a poor runner indeed who couldn't make his way back to the free canteen for a handout. The Red Cross, broken barracks, battle salvage, filth and confusion, dusty roads and speeding motor trucks, a blistering summer sun that scorched the doughboy day after day, decrepit French women at the little wash-pool—these are flashes which come to mind when the 112th doughboy thinks of Dravegny.

And in the shell-torn back yards, in the little church ground and here and there the tell-tale pine crosses over freshly turned earth were mute evidence of another story, the one which we were all learning by heart day after day in the war zone of the Vesle.

CHAPTER XII

THE TRAGEDY AT FISMETTE

Second Tour of Duty Along the Vesle—The Shock Troops of the Germans Rush Fismette on August 27th —Plans to Retake Town by a Provisional Company— Relief From the Vesle River Early on September 1st.

THE second tour of duty along the Vesle River began without event on the night of August 18th and 19th, and by the morning of the 19th Companies A and C were holding Fismette, B Company was guarding the right flank south of the river; and D Company, minus one platoon, was covering the left flank. Thus the 1st Battalion of the 112th Infantry, comprising the companies named, was occupying the front line of the 56th Brigade sector along the Vesle River, in Fismes and Fismette.

On the left was the 308th Infantry, a 77th Division unit; on the right was the 110th Infantry, of our own 55th Brigade. Regimental Headquarters' advance P.C. was established at "Death Curve" (the eastern extremity of old Fond de Mezières, or "Death Valley") on the Dravegny-St. Gilles road, while the Headquarters Company was in the valley. Dugouts, funkholes, and grub sent forward from Dravegny in marmite cans twice a day were the ruling elements of that life up the line once more.

The Supply Company remained in its position, a kilo east of Dravegny; the Machine Gun Company was in

position a kilo east of Fismes; 2d Battalion, a half kilo south of St. Gilles; 3d Battalion, one kilo southwest of St. Gilles.

The enemy kept up the usual harassing fire, but the new sector was not half so treacherous as the first days at Fismes and Fismette earlier in the month. The regimental band, which had seen valiant service as stretcher-bearers in the previous action, were again ready for any eventuality, occupying dugouts with the Headquarters Company not far from "Death Curve."

Under Captain Graff and braving withering machine gun fire, Company A, on August 21st, extended its position in the west end of Fismette; the Germans, it was reported, occupied the eastern section of the town in force. Only a few houses were German-held, reports that day indicated, and these were being "cleaned" out in typical American fashion. On the 22d the 3d Battalion relieved the 1st in the front line, this being accomplished under an American barrage and entailing no casualties whatever. Meanwhile, the other units were kept occupied at night in digging reserve trenches—merely a precautionary measure against a Hun rush; for at that time there were reports the Germans were rushing reinforcements to the sector and that they might make an attempt to retake Fismes.

The duties of those first eight days in the area between Fond de Mezières and the Vesle were more or less of a routine nature, and this is best described perhaps in the detailed report of that time, prepared by Captain

JERRY GUNS TAKEN ALONG THE VESLE RIVER,

And their captors: Left to right, front row: Alva E. King and James W. Moore; back row: Miles H. Howe, John K. Angood and Franklin E. Freeman. Picture taken south of Fismes, August 13th

FIRST BATTALION OFFICERS WITH CAPTURED MATERIAL

They were among the first to cross the Vesle into Fismette. Left to right: Capt. John F. Graff, Jr.; Lieut. Willman O. Zacharias, Lieut. Cecil R. Everett, Capt. Harry F. Miller, Commanding First Battalion; Lieut. Rippey T. Shearer; Lieut. Charles R. Galbrath, Jr., Battalion Adjutant; Lieut. Leslie C. Hiltebeitel. Lieut. Theodore A. Little, Sanitary Detachment, is standing

Sylvanus A. Fenno, then the Intelligence Officers of the regiment:

1. On 16 August, 1918, the 112th Infantry received orders to relieve the 109th Infantry, then holding the left sub-sector of the Penn Sector; the 1st Battalion of the 112th to take over the left half of the sub-sector on the night of 17–18 August; the 2d Battalion the right half on the night of 18–19 August; the 3d Battalion to go into support on the line of resistance on the night of 18–19 August; the command of the line of resistance to pass to the Commanding Officer, 112th Infantry, at 5 hr., 19 August.

2. That part of the order affecting the 1st Battalion was carried out when the order was superseded by the following changes: The 1st Bn. to extend its front to include the entire sub-sector on the night of 18–19 August. The 2d Bn. to take a position on the right half of the line of resistance. The 3d Bn. the left of the line of resistance. The entire relief was effected in good order. By 5 A.M., August 19, all units were in their assigned positions.

3. The disposition of the combat groups in the front lines was completed with A and C Companies occupying Fismette, B Company holding the right flank south of the river; D Company, minus one platoon, used to cover left flank, in support in Fismes. By this time mixed liaison combat groups had been established with the units on our flanks. One company of the 109th M. G. Bn., together with the M. G. Co., 112th Infantry, took up position previously selected in the zone of combat groups. On the night of 19–20 the enemy attempted to launch a raid on our left flank in Fismette. This was quickly repulsed by our automatic rifles. No casualties.

4. Up to this time the houses on the extreme left of Fismette were being occupied after dark by enemy machine gunners, who were causing considerable trouble to our troops; so on the night of 20–21 August, under cover of our own normal barrage, supplemented by Stokes mortars and one-pounders of this regiment, Company A, after a slight engagement, succeeded in extending its left flank to include this part of Fismette.

5. The balance of the time in the line the 1st Bn. spent in con-

solidating the strong points established, burying the dead and patrolling for machine gun nests and prisoners. Under the supervision of the 103d Engineers, the balance of the regiment constructed trenches under cover of darkness along the line of resistance. This work continued during the whole period of this report.

6. On the night of the 22–23 August the 1st Bn. in front line was relieved by the 3d Bn., the former occupying the position of the 3d Bn. on the line of resistance. Also Companies A and B, 109th M. G. Battalion and the M. G. Co., 112th Inf., in the outpost zone, the latter withdrawing to a position in ravine at 203.8–282.9. The tour of the 3d Bn. while on the front line was spent in further consolidation of their positions. Attempts were made every night to get identification of the enemy opposing us, obtain a reconnaissance of the Vesle River over our entire sector, but only those patrols working in the center of the sector were successful, owing to the activity of enemy machine guns. It is to be noted that the area along the river is continually lit up by flares, making movement in the open very difficult.

7. Constant observation on the part of the 3d Bn. resulted in locating the positions occupied by enemy trench mortars and one-pounders, which heretofore had been harassing our front line. These positions were indicated to the 107th Field Artillery, who with destructive fire effectively silenced the enemy.

8. On the night of 26–27 August the following changes of positions were effected: The 1st Bn., 111th Inf., moved into position formerly occupied by the 3d Bn., 111th, and the latter moving up to the line of resistance; and took up a position where the 2d Bn., 112th, had been stationed. The 2d Bn., 112th Inf., relieved the 3d Bn. on the front line; the 3d Bn. then moved back to the area vacated by the 1st Bn., 111th, in the barrier zone. The relief on the front line was accomplished in good order without casualties, all units being in position by 1 hr. Company H occupied the right flank and G Company the left flank in Fismette. South of the river, Company F held the right of the sector, E Company the left. Liaison with the flanks was obtained without delay.

Meanwhile, flies and heat waves proved more bothersome during those days in dugout land than German shells, for the Huns had lost their accuracy of range and merely aimed at the roads and whatever traffic happened along—in this way causing a few casualties now and then.

Fismes was still a center of tumbling buildings and air attacks from German machines, and day to day the beautiful city hall in the heart of the city was gradually reduced by shellfire. But the flies were there in millions; every time the marmite cans came up and mess was distributed big bees and a hundred flies swarmed over each mess pan and its contents—and then a burning sun blistered things and made it almost impossible to sleep at night.

On the 23d Major Smathers, who had been gassed in action during the fight in the woods near Courpoil, returned to duty and appeared delighted to get back. He said he had been sojourning at Vichy, a famous health resort south of Paris. "It feels like home," he said, "to be back with this regiment; wherever the 112th is in France, that is home to me, and it seems fine to be back here again."

Just as I poked my head out of the dugout that morning, Fritz let fly with a surprise shot that buried itself in the soft mud some 50 feet from the little alcove in which we ate our breakfast. Mud and pebbles were scattered about; one window in the Colonel's car was smashed and a motorcycle nearby was wrecked, but five

minutes later we ate our breakfast of oatmeal, milk, bacon and coffee with real relish.

Bombing expeditions by German planes, the usual harassing fire from shrapnel and minor engagements along the Vesle went down on record for the next three days. On the 25th, which was Sunday, Colonel Rickards quietly observed his 58th birthday in his dugout. It was also Brigadier-General William Weigel's birthday, and the two officers had planned to celebrate it together.

It was during these days that we became acquainted with what the French messenger dogs could do; carefully trained and wonderfully wide-awake, they made the trip to Fismes from the regimental P. C. in thirteen minutes, and they did not have to stop, en route. Shellfire had no terror for them, and the only occasion on which they made any noise was when the moon came up. Those were wonderfully beautiful nights up in the dugout land, those days of the second trick along the Vesle.

But the days were unmercifully hot, and despite the hundreds of flies that swarmed about the walls and dirt ceiling of the little funkholes and dugouts, every doughboy who could was mighty glad to keep under cover, wrap his head in his blouse and " sound off " for a sleep. It was only in this way that he could get any rest. Cooties were just then beginning to make themselves obnoxious, and they added to the bodily misery inflicted by the warm August sun.

On August 21st I had rolled my pack and gathered up my Corona and some paper, and started for the advance P. C. That night the Barron brothers, runners at regimental, helped me fix up a dugout office, really no more than an enlarged funkhole, and the following day, adjusted to the situation, I wrote home as follows:

In a Dugout up the Line,
August 22, 1918.

With perspiration rolling down my face, and my shirt wet enough to provide a comfortable bath were it not quite so warm—and with nicely cut tree limbs a foot overhead, allowing a filter of soft earth to trickle down your neck now and then when a nearby gun goes off—I realize that I am in a dugout. And the dugout, in the parlance of the game over here, is "up the line."

I've slept in holes in the ground, mere little "graves" or shallow shelters, as they call 'em, but it is the first time I've ever made my home in a little 4 × 4 dugout. Dimensions are difficult, for it is merely a nice little slit in the wall, in which to recline and try to snatch some sleep between barrages at night, and a "room" that measures 4 × 4 feet, and isn't 5 feet high. It is, in other words, a hole in the ground, and you crawl in and out just as if you were a rabbit. A long box answers as a cupboard, clothes chest, desk and everything, and holds nothing more than this little Corona, my mess kit, a towel, some soap and a few sheets of writing paper. The shelter-half and one blanket, placed on top of two or three old empty burlap sacks in the slit in the wall, provide the comfortable bed of which I spoke; and so here I am, guns down in the valley a hundred or so yards away sending iron greetings to Fritz, and Fritz, in turn, sending over a return barrage that makes it unsafe to wander outdoors while the fireworks are in progress.

But in spite of the heat, the intermittent shelling, an occasional gas alarm and the persistent biting of the flies, I am enjoying life in this dugout. There is a certain added thrill of being up the line.

Something of the appreciation for cigarettes and chocolates at such a time as this may be gleaned from the following paragraphs of a doughboy's letter to a friend back home:

You remember I thought I would never smoke, but the fact of the matter is I don't attempt it when we are back getting a rest under circumstances less trying. I can tell the difference now between a Camel, Lucky Strike and a Nebo; there was a time when they all looked alike to me; but English "cigs," first issued when we hit this country of Française, cured me. There *is* a distinction in brands, and the ones I have named are those most readily obtainable in this sector. Friendship over here is a matter of cigarettes oft-times—it opens the pathway to conversation with the stranger who is going up with his heavy pack, or the tired, grimy-looking fellow, with a week's crust of dirt on him, coming out.

Last night two boxes of real American chocolates (in the tin cans which are sold by the U. S. Commissary at 54 cents) were sent to the hospital boys at the first-aid station, which is near here. They passed the chocolates around, and how good they tasted; they were the first ones I had had for nearly two weeks; we get the idea over here that we aren't soldiering sometimes unless there is a box of chocolates sticking somewhere in the pack.

Best of all, there is no liquor in the army; and it cannot be obtained anywhere in this sector. The light wines are harmless, and are recommended for drinking purposes, but as yet I have not touched them, and intend to abstain, despite all qualities that might be claimed in their behalf. A cleaner bunch of fighting men no nation ever sent into action than our own boys.

But while the second tour of duty along the Vesle was something of a routine nature, in comparison with the shock of real battle several weeks before, yet it was no vacation. Jerry's shellfire was as much on the job as ever, and our own guns were by no means inactive.

Cloud-creasing and retaliatory fire was the order of the day, morning, noon and night.

And early on the morning of August 27th hell let loose in Fismette.

Before Companies G and H could get their positions well organized, after having relieved Companies K and I, the Germans launched a surprise attack under a heavy barrage that cut off help from south of the river and prevented many of the S. O. S. signals and flares being seen.

The story of Fismette is the story of a fluke. Primarily, it is the old, old story of trying to hold a bridgehead without any support to the right or left.

Colonel Rickards had sized up the situation several days before, and had sent word to Division Headquarters in an effort to have the 77th Division troops to the left attack and gain the north bank of the Vesle, as well as for the 110th Infantry to launch a strenuous attack on the right bank. But the 77th Division would not make the assault, and in due course of time one of its Brigade Commanders, in charge of Vesle River operations, was relieved and sent to the rear.

On the afternoon of August 26th, General Robert Bullard, then in command of the Army of which the 28th Division was a part, accompanied Major-General Muir to the advance regimental P. C. of the 112th, and Colonel Rickards explained the Fismette situation to both, asking for permission to withdraw unless attacks could be made on the flanks, thus strengthening the bridgehead. General Bullard left, promising to see what he could do.

But meanwhile the Hun attack came, just as Colonel Rickards had predicted, and the following morning Companies G and H were literally wiped out as fighting organizations of the 112th, sustaining casualties of 60 to 70 killed, 51 wounded taken prisoners, and 88 unwounded also captured; this, out of a total combined strength in Fismette of 230 men and four officers.

Four officers were lost to the regiment; one, Lieut. Joseph A. Landry, being killed, and the other three—Lieutenants Schmelzer, Fredenburg and Young—being taken prisoners. Less than two-score men and but two officers, Lieutenants Ben E. Turner and George Riggs, managed to return to the south bank of the Vesle and tell what little they knew at that time of the catastrophe.

The figures given here regarding the casualties were not available until long afterward, when the three captured officers made their way back to the 112th Infantry after release from German prison camps, in December, 1918. That in itself is a story all its own. Colonel Rickards, however, closely approximated the losses in his first reports to Brigade and Division Headquarters.

Stationed at the advance regimental P. C. the morning of the attack, I was there as the first survivors came back—some water-soaked through swimming across the Vesle, others slightly wounded and some gassed. My little book for that day records in brief the details then known regarding Fismette, and to give the impression that prevailed at that time I take the liberty of quoting the following paragraphs:

THE FAMOUS STONE DAM OVER THE VESLE INTO FISMETTE

It was here that a heavy toll of life was taken, and where many 112th men fell, fatally wounded. Both sides of the Vesle and the bottom of the stream were lined with barbed wire

The Second Battalion took up the Third Battalion positions in the front line along the Vesle River shortly after midnight. After the relief had been effected, and G and H Companies were trying to establish themselves in Fismette, something happened. At 4.15, after a heavy barrage that crept down the hillside and through the village, the enemy made an attack. The boys, either outnumbered or greatly excited, made a stand for an hour or more, and then fled. Some were captured, a number killed and more were listed as missing. Estimates of the number of German soldiers engaged vary; Colonel Rickards is of the opinion there were 200 in the party which swarmed down the hillside and came in from the east and west.

Some Americans fled across the little bridge that spans the Vesle; others fought where they stood, in the shambles of houses, picking off the Germans with automatic rifles, Eddystones or bombs. Potato mashers were in plentiful use by the Huns, who made a practice of throwing them in the doorways. Men were everywhere—and the dust and fog were so great that the survivors stated you couldn't tell an American from a German without looking twice. Seven men, two of them lieutenants, were interviewed at Regimental Headquarters.

First, G Company was cut off from its positions west of the bridge street and then Company H was surrounded. G had 124 men and H about 106 in the battle; how many returned to this side has not been definitely established, but from appearances the number is not great (and figures later bore out this surmise), though there may be some stragglers.

Captain Lucius M. Phelps, of Erie, commanding the Second Battalion, was wounded at his P. C. in Fismes, and Capt. Harry F. Miller, of Meadville, thereupon took command. Lieut. Milford Fredenburg, of Company H, and Lieut. Edward Schmelzer, of Company G, both Company Commanders, were taken prisoners in the scrap, as well as Lieut. Joseph A. Landry, reported to have been wounded. As near as can be ascertained, the fighting in Fismette continued until about 10 o'clock, when it is said that the last remnant of H Company made a break across the river. Second Lieut. Benjamin E. Turner, Company H, who was wounded in the arm,

and Second Lieut. Edward Riggs, of the same company, were among the first to make statements, following their arrival at the Regimental P. C. Other men who were survivors were questioned during the day.

The loss of Lieutenants Fredenburg and Schmelzer will be felt by the regiment, as they are two of the best officers we have. One body of men, said to number 20, were seen going over the hill in charge of German guards at 11 o'clock. It was thought these were some of our men, taken captive in the early morning scrap.

It will be noted from this description that nothing was known regarding Second Lieut. Albert A. L. Young, of Company G. News that Lieut. Landry was killed did not come until after the armistice was signed.

Lieut. Turner, at the time of the attack by the Germans on Fismette, was one of the newest officers, but he made good and demonstrated courage under trying conditions. The story, in part, as he related it then, follows:

The night was normal. The barrage of the enemy opened just before daylight. I did not look at my watch, and it continued for 20 or 25 minutes.

They started with machine guns; the Boche seemed to have put them in place during the night; then they used grenades. On my extreme right I had the flank protected by two automatic rifles in a shell hole in the orchard between the line of houses and the Vesle River. The major portion of my garrison was in the house. The Germans worked into the town from the east and northeast, through the woods and ditches. Every one of the ditches seemed to have a machine gun emplacement in it. Every time we stuck our heads out they would open up. The narrow-gauge railroad at this point was swept all the time by machine gun fire.

We held out, however, without any trouble until 5.30, when we heard a lot of shouting. At the same time I looked out and saw men running across the bridge into Fismes. There were probably

20 or 25 of them that I saw. Somebody came running down the yard then and said the whole left flank of our positions in Fismette had given way (meaning Company G) and that Lieut. Fredenburg and the whole platoon were prisoners. His was the second platoon. All the time the Boche were coming in. I had several of my men killed. The enemy had snipers in ruins of houses and in the trees.

Lieut. Turner, his wound in the arm yet undressed, and now and then gasping for breath because of being gassed, was barely able to talk above a whisper. His uniform was torn, his face was haggard, and he looked wholly unable to continue his story, but he kept on:

Some time after the other platoon gave way, my own platoon commenced to give, and the major portion of the platoon came running down into the back yard of the building; they cried out as they went by that two companies of Germans were coming, and that everybody was to look out for himself. I could not get out to stop them. They were absolutely panic-stricken. They went across the river at the dam.

That left me with about 15 men. I had the P. C. and the house next to it. I brought in the automatic rifles because they were being sniped at. Then we held the one house. I told my men they could go back if they wanted to, but I would stay, as I cannot swim. The boys all stayed. We took up that position at 7 o'clock, and stayed there until after 10.

When the Germans started shelling the house, I saw the last chance was to go down to the dam in the rear. The woods were full of snipers. Not a shot was fired at the men as they crossed the river at the dam, however, and when I went across only four or five shots went by, some of them hitting the woodwork of the dam. They were snipers' bullets, not machine guns. All eight men left with me got across.

Lieut. Turner, speaking of casualties in his platoon, said that seven of his men were killed in the orchard behind the house. First three were killed and another

slightly wounded. Three ran to his side, thinking they could get him across the river. All were killed, including the wounded man, by machine guns that swept the crossing.

It was Second Lieut. George Riggs, another Company H officer, who really brought the first story of the surprise attack, declaring that the Germans not only used machine guns freely in the streets of Fismette, but advanced with liquid fire. He said:

As soon as the barrage lifted, the Germans began to pour down between combat groups, which were located in the second stories of the houses. We opened fire, threw hand grenades from the entrances to the cellars, and ran across the courtyard to the street, thinking that the bunch across there had formed a line along the street. There was no line there, however, and the Germans were coming up the street towards the east with liquid fire, shooting at the houses on the south side of the road. We killed the first two liquid fire men.

A post of about four Germans was in a shack in front of the bridge. I think we killed them all; we silenced them anyhow. The Germans continued to pour down, however; we were at a place just in front of the bridge then. Two of my men had been automatic riflemen, but had no rifles and were wounded. We were outnumbered on each flank, and we withdrew. It was getting light, and we crossed the bridge under cover of a dense smoke. Then we continued along the road to the railroad. When the enemy started bombarding Fismes, we lay in holes along the railroad for fifteen minutes, then started out to find some of the companies.

Both officers declared they knew absolutely nothing of a heavy barrage said to have been laid down by the 77th Division.

In addition to the two officers, five enlisted men told their story that day. These were: Corp. Frank Motley

and Pvt. Bernard Spellen, of Company H; and Privates C. H. Wright, Harris Peters and Fay A. Holman, of Company G. The last two did not arrive at Regimental Headquarters until nightfall; the others reported and told their story before their clothes had had time to dry or they had anything to eat.

It was Motley who paid tribute to the splendid courage of Lieut. Turner, who was probably the last man to leave Fismette alive.

"We fellows stuck it out, and had to swim across the river," Motley said. "The Lieutenant had told us to stand and hold our position, and we did. Fellows from another platoon came running across and said the Huns were capturing our men. Then the Lieutenant said: 'You fellows beat it across the river and I will stay here with the sergeants until you get across.' The Germans were holding the bridge at that time, so we had to swim. I don't know whether the Lieutenant succeeded in getting across or not."

Two of the best stories told that day, and the ones which appeared to be borne out later by the facts disclosed upon the return of the captured officers—four months after the disaster—were those of Privates Wright and Spellen. Private Wright's story was substantially as follows:

It was the wickedest barrage I ever saw, starting about 4.30, and continuing for fifteen minutes, then advancing. We held our ground until it took the roof off, and then we went downstairs and kept up our observation there while in the building.

But we couldn't do much observation because of smoke and fog. Then Jerry came down in big numbers—seemed to be a sort of mob rule, with no organization. They seemed to be concentrating on this one post. We pulled out of the rear of the building and dropped down. Some of our fellows were still in dugouts on account of the barrage, and we told them to get out of there. One of the men ran towards company headquarters to tell Lieut. Schmelzer, and each man then made a fighting position for himself.

Private Goodyear came from the headquarters with the word that Lieut. Schmelzer said: "Stand and fight." So we turned back, and just as three of us were going out the door of the court, a bomb dropped in front. It hit Corp. Lightner, who fell on me. We bumped into two men from H Company. Then I saw another soldier near us; I thought he might be an American. But his helmet came down over his ears, and he had a potato masher in his hand. I pulled the lock on the rifle and pulled the trigger, but there was nothing in the chamber. I managed to load somehow, and shot him.

The Germans came up in columns of twos, bombing all the way. I took a bomb from the corporal and threw it; in the shuffle that followed I lost my rifle; I reached for it, and it was gone. Then I hurried back. I found myself in a courtyard; I went out one door and saw Germans; went out another and saw more of them. I ducked into a doorway and stood there; a bomb exploded not far away. Then I saw one of our men; he was calling for Lieut. Landry. I saw Lieut. Schmelzer busy with a wounded man about that time. The Boche had us pretty well surrounded. We got down near the river and took up a position. One German came towards us and we got him, then another, and so we picked them off for awhile. We started cross-firing then and got more. That is where we were when the boys started surrendering. Then we beat it to the river bank, and the only thing for us to do was to run the bridge then. One man swam the river and was wounded. There were five of us who ran for it, and we got out safely.

We ran up the street (in Fismes) until it turned. We knew E and F were in support; we looked for them. We saw two H men,

but they knew nothing of E and F. All I can say is that there wasn't much organization in that fight. There were men all around, coming out of holes, doors and windows into the street. The Americans and Germans were mixed up. We had to look hard through the fog to make out whether it was our own man or a Boche.

Spellen, a hardly little fighter of Company H, told how he had to swim the Vesle for his life, after his platoon, occupying an exposed position to the east of the bridge street in Fismette, had been subjected to heavy fire. He said:

We had two positions there; one was a kind of cellar-way, and the other was at the top of the steps. We waited until the barrage lifted, and then watched the road in front of us. The corporal on the automatic rifle said, "There comes one now," and he fired, getting him. Then the Boche grew thicker and thicker, they came from everywhere—holes in the walls, doors, windows, alleyways, and down the street, wherever there was a chance for them to get in. We stood there and fired.

An order came down the street which said: "They have all surrendered." I couldn't understand that very well. Things were pretty much mixed up. I had seen some of our men going across the bridge; then I saw three of the Dutch go across, and then I saw a number of our men in charge of German guards. I knew then that it was our men, not the Germans, who were surrendering. There had been a few of our fellows who swam the river before that. Then the Corporal said: "We might as well try to get away." We ran into Lieut. Turner, and he said he wanted men to go for reinforcements, others to stay and fight with him. I went back and stayed there. After awhile he said, "Some of you can try to get over, and see if you can get help." When he told us that, I ran down to the river, jumped in and swam across. I ran into Company E and told them about it. They sent a runner from the platoon to company headquarters, and then I don't know what happened.

Spellen, asked how many Germans he thought were in the attacking party, answered:

" About a thousand. We piled them up something awful as they came. One little machine gunner laid them down as fast as they advanced."

Both Peters and Holman, from Company G, also declared the 112th boys " piled up the Germans " before making a break, and Peters in his story told of the low-flying Hun aeroplane that swept the Fismette streets with machine gun fire.

" Sometimes it was flying about half the height of a house over the fields and around the river," he added.

In studying the situation at Fismette and what happened that morning of August 27th, it is well to keep in mind that the heavy part of the fighting took place along the east-and-west thoroughfare and on the street joining it at right angles several hundred yards west of what is known as the " bridge street," through which troops entered the town in crossing from Fismes. Company H held the territory east of the bridge street, and a small section on the other side; the remainder of the town in American hands, west of the bridge street, was held by Company G.

But the full story of what happened in Fismette was really shrouded in mystery until Lieuts. Schmelzer, Fredenburg and Young returned late in December from German prison camps at Rastatt, Villingen and Karlsruhe, and told their story. They established the important points that:

Lieut. Joseph A. Landry had died fighting at the west end of the main thoroughfare, with German dead strewn about him.

The attack on Fismette was made by a force of a thousand picked shock troops from the Aisne River, rushed by trucks overnight to positions behind Fismette, there awaiting the lifting of the barrage to attack.

The exact extent to which Companies G and H suffered.

No one thought of surrendering until it was apparent that no help was coming from the south bank of the river.

The 77th Division launched an attack, but failed in the attempt to get across the Vesle.

These were the facts they presented to Colonel Rickards and a group of officers, composing the Regimental Staff, when they reached Buxières more than a month after the armistice signing. Though the story is not in chronological order, it is presented here for the purpose of giving a complete account of the Fismette affair. Schmelzer returned to find himself promoted to a captaincy and assigned to Company G; Lieut. Fredenburg, shortly afterward made a captain, was returned to Company H; and Second Lieut. Albert A. L. Young, of Pittsburgh, was sent to Company G for duty.

All three made it plain that the 112th boys fought to the last ditch, bowling over the attacking Germans until they lay in groups about the street. There were 44 Germans about the area in which Lieut. Landry died.

Landry was firing away, a loaded pistol in each hand, when he was cut down by a German sniper's fire.

And here in detail is the story as they told it that night of December 22d. Captain Schmelzer stated:

It was about 4.15 that morning (August 27th) when they started to shell us. Lieut. Landry had just left the company P. C. for the platoon P. C. after giving me the disposition of his men—as he had placed them after Captain Jenkins and Captain Leetch had departed and the relief had been completed.

My left flank was absolutely unguarded. There was a gap between us and the 77th Division on our left, and also a gap from the river to the automatic rifle group which was about 300 yards from the nearest group on the right. I said to Lieut. Landry then, "We've got to make a change at daylight, and take care of these gaps." He agreed with me, and then left, saying he didn't think there was much danger of the Germans doing anything that night. I was just making out my morning report when they started to shell.

Just before daylight they made the first attack. The boys drove them off, and went back into the buildings again. Then there was another period of shelling for about thirty minutes. Then the Germans, instead of coming in from the front, attacked from the flank; they drove a wedge between the company P. C. and the platoon P. C. I couldn't get in touch with any group and I lost every runner I had in the attempt. They simply surrounded one group of men after another.

They got me between 9 and 10 o'clock that morning. Lieutenant Young was on the extreme left when the Germans started to work in, and they got the first automatic rifle squad at 6.30. Then the Germans surrounded one group after another until they had regained the whole town. But meanwhile, our boys were doing plenty of damage. I am positive we killed at least a hundred Dutchmen, for I counted 44 myself in a corner of the street.

After the first attack had been made and the boys had driven the

Germans off, I sent up three flares for a barrage, but I never got it. One battery of 75s sent a few shells over, about a half dozen, I guess, but that was all the shelling we got. I expected help from the Battalion Commander, but there was nothing coming from the other side of the river. Then the Germans got in behind us; at the same time they drove in a wedge, placed a machine gun on the main street leading to the bridge, and we could not get anybody across. I had 14 men in my P. C. The last man I sent was Green; if any others got across I do not know.

Captain Schmelzer did not know, of course, that Captain (later Major) Lucius M. Phelps, in command of the 2d Battalion, had been wounded in Fismes during the heavy German barrage that morning and was on his way to the rear. And in view of the circumstances and the heavy shell screen between Fismes and Fismette, the Commanders of E and F Companies, lying in trenches south of the Vesle, had little if any idea of the tragedy taking place in the suburb of Fismette, only a few hundred yards to the north.

Outnumbered at least five to one by the force of Germans fresh from the Aisne, the men of Companies G and H put up a brave but gradually losing fight. As the minutes went by and the Hun barrage lifted, the battle gave way to machine-gun fighting on the part of the Germans, intermingled with sniping and automatic rifle work on the part of the American fighters. Then as the fight continued, and one group after another was encircled by forces that greatly outnumbered them, it was the hand-to-hand stuff.

Captain Schmelzer continued:

A sergeant and two privates from H Company who were captured in a shellhole near the bridge, stood off the Germans as long as they could and were taken prisoners, I know of one instance, where one little group was surrounded. All the ammunition for the Chauchat rifles was gone. The men were on the point of fighting to the last ditch with their bare hands. Then a dark form appeared at the window; a German machine gun was thrust in place—and then one of the fellows took a good swing with his rifle and brought the butt of it right down on the German's head. That finished him. The ammunition that the Hun carried was used to good advantage, and in a second the German machine gun was doing deadly work in the street.

But as daylight came and no help arrived from the other side of the river, the boys began to realize they were playing a losing game. The toll had been pretty heavy. Runners sent for help did not return; most of them, no doubt, were cut down under machine gun fire as they tried to cross the river.

I didn't expect any men to get back, in fact. You couldn't go into the street without being fired at. They had a machine gun on our left which we could see in operation.

We were simply playing a waiting game, that was all. Every man was fighting for himself—and he was fighting. Every squad was fighting its battle and doing nobly. We had an automatic rifle squad up the street and another firing down the street, thus protecting our P. C. as long as their ammunition lasted. Then we had two or three riflemen in the rear.

Things continued to get warmer all the time. Then we posted sharpshooters, one shooting up the street and another down. Both did good work from the shelter of an old barn that was roofless. But finally the Germans got to them. Lieutenant Fredenburg and I, a sergeant and an orderly were the only ones left at 9 that morning.

"Did you hear anyone advising the men to surrender?" asked Colonel Rickards.

"No; the only time that I heard anything that might be consid-

ered in that line was when the Germans used a captured H Company man as a shield. He came down the street," Captain Schmelzer continued, " and when he got to our P. C. he stuck his head in the door: ' You'd better surrender, the town is full of Germans,' he said. I was just pulling him into the building when a dozen Germans came rushing in right after him. Our boxes of grenades were gone, our Chauchat ammunition was long since exhausted. All we had left was our pistols, and I don't believe even then, realizing we were surrounded, that we would have given in had it not been for the fact that the Germans took us by surprise.

" We played for time. I used my German to advantage [few officers in the regiment could speak the language as fluently as Captain Schmelzer] and I stalled them off. They were nothing but young fellows. I joined them, and under several pretexts made trips to the dugout and back. I saw they were a pretty good bunch, but I didn't want to surrender right off the bat. We monkeyed around there for the better part of half an hour; I was hoping every minute for a counter-attack. Then we became convinced that it was a losing game. No help came from the other side of the river. Meanwhile, our snipers who still lived were picking off members of this party; every now and then one of the Germans would drop dead in his tracks. Finally, we just had to give in; had we thought, however, that help was coming Fredenburg and I would have put up a fight, even against odds and even with our bare fists."

Captain Schmelzer related how four men whom he had sent to occupy a protecting trench near the P. C. were blown to pieces by one direct hit from a German minnenwerfer. " I knew the four men were there," he said, " but I can't recall who they were. Then the shell lit, there was a cloud of dirt and dust and a horrible scene followed. All that was left of those four fellows was spattered on the walls of the courtyard."

The details as Captain Schmelzer, Lieutenant Fre-

denburg and Lieutenant Young recalled and outlined them for the benefit of the officers proved conclusively that any thought that " green soldiers " had been scared into " surrendering without a fight " was a slur on the brave spirit of the men who fought to the last ditch.

Down in a corner of the street, with Lieutenant Young, was Lieutenant Landry. Long after the attack started, Landry was firing away at the Huns, bowling them over as they came. One pistol wasn't enough and at the last, with the street literally strewn with dead and dying Germans, Landry—big of stature and full of life—was still firing, not with one automatic, but with two, blazing away. Then a German sniper picked him off, and Landry fell to rise no more.

From both sides of the building came the Huns. Young and the few men with him who still lived were caught; there was no chance to get away. This was about 6.30 in the morning.

" Have you any idea how many prisoners were taken there?" queried Colonel Rickards.

" They got 22 wounded and 62 unwounded of my men, G Company," Captain Schmelzer said. "I had 124 men in the town; the total strength of the company at the time was 165 or 166 men, but there were some back at the kitchens, some as battalion runners and others had been dropped off for liaison purposes."

" As for Company H," Lieutenant Fredenburg said, " we lost 24 men as prisoners who were not wounded, and 29 who were hit by shrapnel or machine guns were also taken. This made a total of 53. We had a total of 106 men in the front line in Fismette when the relief of Company I was completed that morning."

Neither officer knew the exact number killed, but estimated it between 60 and 70.

Captain Schmelzer in his story confirmed the statement made the morning of the attack by Lieutenant Ben Turner, of Company H, who fought his way across the Vesle and was wounded, that the Germans used flame-throwers and liquid fire in the attack.

"These men made particularly good targets and our men cut them down in short order," Schmelzer said.

Even after we were captured and the Germans were marching us up the hill, one American continued to pick our guard off. I saw a blue spot in one Hun's temple and he crumpled up; then another one on the other side of me dropped. Then I saw a piece of a head go by and another German fell, and still another soldier gave a shriek and fell a crumpling mass on the street. I'd like to meet that game American sniper some day, believe me.

Capt. Ignatius J. Meenan, of Ridgway, Supply Officer of the regiment, said that the man was Sergeant Jimmy Moore, of Company H, whose name is now on the roll of honored dead. Moore succeeded later in beating his way to safety across the river, but he had been badly gassed and when sent to a hospital in the rear, did not live long afterward. Moore, however, told Captain Meenan (then a lieutenant) how he had picked off the Germans as they escorted the two officers, Captain Schmelzer and Lieutenant Fredenburg, to the rear. He killed seven Germans in seven minutes.

Stories of the heavy toll taken of the Germans were also corroborated, not only by Captain Schmelzer and Lieutenant Fredenburg, but by Lieutenant Young as well. It was Lieutenant Young who distinguished him-

self in the attack on Hill 204. He wiped up three Germans with a hand grenade when they surrounded him, and then, when attacked again, fought his way out, though his arm was crippled. It is a coincidence that he was sent back to the regiment just four days before the surprise attack on Fismette took place.

That the Germans had prepared four days in advance for the raid on Fismette was the information the Huns themselves gave to the captured officers when they were sent to Division Headquarters on the Aisne River.

"When they found out that Schmelzer and Fredenburg were our German-sounding names, the Huns picked up their ears," Captain Schmelzer said. "Then when they found I could speak German as well as English, they opened their eyes wide. Meanwhile, I learned a lot on our way back. The German commander told me he had prepared for this raid for four days. 'It was the German supposition,' he said, 'that most of our men succeeded in getting out of Fismette,' but that was a bluff. He told me there were fully a thousand Germans in the raiding party [this in itself was news to the officers of the 112th Infantry, who had heard there were only 200 Germans in the rush] and that these had been brought in motor trucks from the Aisne River that night.

"The Germans who held Fismette did not participate in the attack on our troops; they did, however, repel the raid of the 77th Division men to the west of us."

The news of the 77th's attack was something of a novelty to the 112th's officers. Colonel Rickards let it be known that he had asked for protection on the left flank; he had even asked permission to withdraw from Fismette until such protection could be given.

We were taken to Division Headquarters on the Aisne (the Captain said). "That was 9 to 11 kilometers from Fismette. We stayed there until 7 that night. There were some men from the 77th there, including Captain Adams, and with Lieutenant Young we were all taken to St. Erme. Captain Adams, Lieutenant Young, Lieutenant Fredenburg and myself were put into an automobile and sent on.

It was then that Captain Adams told me of the attack launched by the 306th Infantry. It failed. The 77th crossed the river, but were driven back. Captain Adams got his orders for the attack at 2 o'clock the morning of August 27th. The Germans had been expecting such a move, and gave them hell. The 77th attack was launched about the time the Germans started their heavy barrage. Only one or two platoons got across the river, and they were driven back, while 18 or 20 men of the 306th were captured.

The German Adjutant at Division Headquarters told me that the attack was repulsed by the German troops in Fismette, and that the ones who participated in the two attacks on our men were brought from the Aisne River in motor trucks especially for the purpose. It was their aim to drive us back across the river. There were dugouts already prepared for them, about the hill back of Fismette and near the river bank. The first attack on the front failing, the second was launched on the flank, and you know the rest of the story.

What surprised me most were the details that the Germans knew regarding our organization. The Adjutant seemed to know more about the disposition of our own troops than I did. He told me that Colonel Rickards was in command of the 112th and that Colonel Shannon was in charge of the 111th.

A German boy who could talk English also told me that he had eaten in my mess line the night before, and to prove it he told me just what we had for supper and all about it.

He had come over in an American uniform and, mingling with the replacements which we had recently received, had secured a good piece of white bread, all the information he could take with him and got safely back.

As to Landry, Captain Schmelzer said:

The last communication I had from poor Landry was to the effect, "What shall I do?" I answered, "We can't do anything except fight it out." The runner started back to Landry. Whether he made it or not I don't know. That is the last word I had from him. We fought to the last ditch, and were caught. Fredenburg was wounded in the cheek, but the rest of us were all right. We didn't learn that Landry was dead until we reached German Division Headquarters and met Young, and he told us Landry had died a hero's death, fighting to the end.

Thus was the mystery of Fismette cleared.

A thousand fresh German shock troops, the best the Kaiser had, were rushed from the Aisne; the original force in Fismette lay dormant, and 28th Division officers were baffled and led to doubt stories of the few survivors that "fully a thousand Germans swarmed down the hillside and from everywhere."

This was the story the officers themselves told, and had it been available shortly after the catastrophe instead of four months later it might have aided considerably in plans to pay the Hun back in his own coin.

Before noon on the 27th Colonel Rickards had published a memorandum which stated:

The outpost stationed in Fismette, composed of Companies G and H, was attacked this morning about 4 o'clock by what is an unknown force. Both companies suffered from the enemy's fire and withdrew to the south side of the river. The withdrawal from Fismette on the part of these two companies was but little less than a rout. * * * Let the casualties and the capture of our comrades be a spur to greater effort on our part to overcome the enemy and to punish him three-fold for our losses. Every officer and man of the 112th Infantry must do his full duty.

Without delay plans were set afoot for the recapture of the village on the north bank of the Vesle, and on the 29th Colonel Rickards issued Secret Field Order 1 and published it for all organizations concerned. This provided for a "provisional company made up from officers and men of companies other than those on the outpost" with the express mission of retaking Fismette.

On the evening of August 29th this order was written and made ready for distribution. It read:

SECRET

HEADQUARTERS 112TH INFANTRY,
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES,
FRANCE.

FIELD ORDERS No. 1. 10 P.M., 29 AUGUST, 1918.

1. The enemy holds FISMETTE with a force, strength unknown, armed with machine guns, trench mortars, automatic rifles and rifles. His supporting troops are entrenched in the hillside above FISMETTE. Our division is echeloned in the area within the VESLE RIVER and DRAVEGNY and covering a front of about 2½ kilometers east and west, with its center marked by the southwestern corner of FISMES.

2. The 2d Battalion, reinforced by a provisional company of 112th Infantry, Machine Gun Company of the 111th Infantry, one company of the 109th Machine Gun Battalion, and trench mortar platoon of this regiment and the one-pounder platoons of the 111th and 112th Infantries will attack FISMETTE on D day at H hour.

3. (a) A provisional company made up from officers and men of companies other than those on the outpost has been formed with the mission of retaking FISMETTE. Its officers are: Robert J. Jenkins, Captain; Joseph P. Connell, 1st Lt.; Frederick L. Pond, 1st Lt.; William O. Zacharias, 1st Lt.; Charles W. Thomas, 1st Lt.; Rippey T. Shearer, 1st Lt.; 1 Sergeant, 3 Corporals, 20 enlisted

men from Companies A, B, C, D, I, K, L and M each; a roster of the non-commissioned officers and privates will be published by name later.

(b) The attack will be made by the provisional company, 112th Infantry; supported by the elements of the regiment now in FISMES and named in Paragraph 2.

(c) At zero hour a destructive artillery fire will be put down on FISMETTE and will be held stationary until zero plus 15. The fire will then lift to a point 300 meters north of FISMETTE and remain stationary. At zero plus 20 hour the provisional company will move on FISMETTE over the ST. GILLES-FISMES-FISMETTE road bridge.

The first platoon, after crossing the bridge, will take position under cover of the first building on the west side of the street and will remain there for the purpose of aiding in the consolidation of a success, or covering a retreat of our troops if necessary to withdraw from FISMETTE.

The second platoon will continue to the street running to the northeast, turning to the right on this street, and take a position covering this street and the buildings to the east.

The third and fourth platoons, under command of Lieut. Connell, will turn west on the main street of FISMETTE, each dropping their rear squad as soon as entering the street, where they will remain as a covering party. Lt. Connell will remain with these squads and direct these movements. The platoons will continue to move forward, searching out and destroying the enemy as he is met, the third platoon on the north and the fourth platoon on the south side of the street.

(d) The trench mortar platoon will take position at coördinate 204.9–286.7, covering to west limits of FISMETTE.

The 37 mm. platoon composed of the 111th and 112th Infantries will take position near 205.6–277.7 and cover the area from the eastern limits of FISMETTE.

The Machine Gun Company of the 111th Infantry, Captain Pollock, will take position near 206.4–286.0 and direct its fire north-

east of FISMETTE between 205.5–206.0 on a line not farther south than 287.5.

The machine gun platoon, 109th Machine Gun Battalion, will take position near 205.3–276.9, covering the line 287.5 east to west from 205.5 to 204.8.

Company F will move up to south side of railway embankment.

Company E will establish a strong point near 205.4–286.6, sending out strong combat patrols forward to the east and west of the main street through FISMES.

Company H will form a right flank combat patrol, taking position about 100 meters in rear of Company F.

4. It is not the intention of the Regimental Commander to limit the initiative of the Commanding Officer and platoon commanders of the attacking company farther than to assure concerted action between each unit. The details for the cleaning up and occupation of FISMETTE are left entirely to the judgment of the Commanding Officer provisional company.

Liaison must be maintained between the supporting elements and attacking company and the platoons. Each officer and sergeant will carry a whistle; identification will be by one short, one long and one short blast following each other in quick succession. Runners will accompany each company and platoon commander, the personnel of which will be furnished from outside of that making up the provisional company.

5. The acting Ordnance Officer of the regiment will be responsible for supplying all needed ammunition, hand grenades, rockets and signal appliances.

6. Dressing stations will be established under direction of the Major Surgeon, who will provide for the necessary stretcher bearers.

By order

COLONEL RICKARDS.

In transmitting a copy of this order to the Brigade Commander, Colonel Rickards the following day wrote:

I wish to call attention to the situation as it now is in relation to my troops and those adjoining me on the right and left. The 55th Brigade, on our right, has its left connected with my right, but from there it extends in the direction of the southeast and offers but little assistance to this regiment. The 307th Infantry, on my left, has one company in contact with my left between the tannery and the west line of our division sector. The next element of the 307th is to the southwest, somewhere about Le Grand Savart, and could be of no assistance.

Before putting the enclosed order in effect, it is my opinion that the forces on my right and left, the 110th and 307th Infantries, respectively, should be brought forward to a line of my advance troops. Otherwise, the enterprise is most likely to fail.

Officers and men of the 112th Infantry are extremely anxious to regain the ground lost at FISMETTE, but unless we can have the support of our flanking elements, feel that it is a hopeless task to regain this ground as it was to hold it without their coöperation.

Part of the " getting ready " game was an American gas attack on Fismette on the morning of the 28th. The Yanks sent their new gas into the ravine northeast of the village; the wind was favorable that morning.

" It provided a fine 4th of July fireworks celebration," Sergeant Sollenberger, one of the men on Observation Post, reported. " The shells exploded, scattering stars far and wide, with a burst of flame, and then there was a light cloud that crept with a favorable wind up the valley. It was something startling, and far different from any gas I ever saw."

The Huns retaliated with a heavy gas shell attack on the 1st Battalion area near Fismes early on the 29th, but luckily our boys were prepared, knew their gas mask

drill to perfection, and so there were no casualties. A heavy German barrage on the night of the 30th was the only event of importance in the war game in that area until our boys marched out on the night of August 31st and morning of September 1st, and took up their old positions about Dravegny, with a few of the units located in the woods near Cohan.

So, as luck would have it, the plan for a rush on Fismette by the provisional company was never carried into effect. But to-day Fismette and the Vesle River constitute a monument to the heroes of the 112th—the resting place in France of many brave Pennsylvania lads. Scores lie in unknown graves, for the Germans buried them in trenches and failed to mark the place. Even time itself will not reveal the exact number of American lives lost on that fateful morning of August 27th. The Germans conquered Fismette that day, only to lose it a week later when they were forced back on the run to the Aisne River, the backbone of their resistance in that sector broken for all time.

CHAPTER XIII

HOBNAILING IT INTO THE ARGONNE

March Southward to the Marne, and the Hard Hike in a Driving Rain to Boursault—Trucks to Maurupt, and the Record-Breaking Four-Day March Into the Argonne—Preparing for America's Greatest Attack.

With the 111th holding our places in the line and Dravegny-Cohan " rest " days resumed on Sunday, September 1st, the next few days were devoted to sending details from the organization over to the old chocolate factory at Abbaye d'Igny—which, through Yankee ingenuity, had been converted into a bath establishment. New underclothes, socks, shoes and even new suits were issued for old clothing, and after waiting in line for several hours, the doughboy with the crust of the front line on his apparel and body was able to get fairly clean.

September 3d took a place in our day-to-day routine simply because we enjoyed the first entertainment we had had anywhere up the line; in fact, it was the first amusement we had enjoyed in France. It took place in the center of the woods east of Dravegny, in which some of our companies were bivouacked. There was a rude platform erected in the afternoon, and at 6.30 that night, with an audience of perhaps a hundred and fifty doughboys, representing mostly members of the Headquarters and Supply Companies, the entertainment was given.

It started with a rush. John Surra took the plat-

form, after an introduction by a visiting Y. M. C. A. man, and led in the singing of " Good-Bye Broadway, Hello France." There wasn't much pep to the song; the boys had been over too long for it to hold its catchy ways with them, and so " Keep the Home Fires Burning " was a far greater success, and was sung again with a real feeling that struck home.

Then Sergeant George Johnston and Silvan Hilliard, of the band, playing a guitar and mandolin, respectively, provided several splendid selections that took the fellows back to other days; as the audience stood around in a semicircle and caught the spirit of the occasion, it was hard to realize that we were just out of the lines two days and that up the valley Yank and Hun were still playing at the same old game, with the Yank on top.

Major Olmes, of dance fame, and who was the head of his own little orchestra in those days back home several years before, rendered a violin solo, " Souvenir," that was equally pleasing, and responded with an encore that also won its way even into the hearts of " rough doughboys "—for even if the fellows had been up the line they had not lost their sense of appreciation of good music. The Supply Company quartette—75 per cent. personnel of the Headquarters Company, however—including Strayer Reynolds, "Bill" Pope, George Amann and Sponsler, took the stage and sang themselves into the historical program of the evening with " The Rose That Made Me Happy is the Rose that Made Me Sad,"

" My Indiana Rose " and several other numbers. Then " Bobby " Roberts, of Oakland, Calif., a Scotchman, dressed in kilties and with plenty of Scotch humor, Irish jokes and thoroughly familiar with Bobby Burns's best verse, delighted the boys until it grew dark—in other words, he held their undivided attention for forty-five minutes, keeping them laughing 99 per cent. of the time.

Some of the jokes were old, but most of them were new—yet their age had nothing to do with the delight they created; a soldier can enjoy anything after having seen the grim side of the game " up there," and so perhaps, at times, the laugh was a little bit emphatic, maybe overstretched, but it was all in the humor of the occasion.

As 8 o'clock came around, it was nearly dark. Guns were booming up the line. Roberts, the little Scotchman in the kilties, was saying something about the brave boys in Flanders and those who had taken part in the game; he said something more about " canning the Kaiser," and added a couple of verses of his own composition to emphasize the fact. He praised the part the Yanks (don't call us Sammies any more) were taking in the game—and then, amid a whirlwind of applause, just as if it had been an every-evening occurrence, this simple little program came to a close.

The expression on the faces of those boys who stood about, laughing and applauding, and then changing as Roberts controlled their emotions at will, was something one will never forget. These were the fellows who had been " up there " only two or three days before, and

though not far removed from the land where things were doing, they seemed to forget the grim game—and that, after all, only went to prove that the entertainers had succeeded.

September 5th came, and with it the word that the Germans were on a hurried retreat to the Aisne; Fismette had fallen and the Germans' big artillery was being hurriedly transferred out of that sector. Then the expected orders for us to move arrived, and in a pouring rain the battalions took up the line of march to St. Gilles and Courville. The new location of the regiment was something like this: Regimental Headquarters, La Bonne Maison, one kilo north of Courville; Headquarters Company, Machine Gun Company, 2d and 3d Battalions, one kilo east of St. Gilles; Supply Company, at Courville; 1st Battalion, one and one-half kilos northeast of St. Gilles.

It was on Friday, September 6th, with Brigadier General Weigel assigned to command the 88th Division, that Colonel Rickards took up active command of the 56th Infantry Brigade, and Major Smathers took active command of the 112th.

That same night, from 10.30 until 11 o'clock, Hun bombing planes took their toll of life in our sector, dropping bombs in the Machine Gun Company and K Company area. The Machine Gun Company lost five killed, three fatally hurt and eight wounded; K Company lost one man slain. It is estimated that there were some twelve hundred casualties in the area that was bombed

that night by the Huns—a terrible vengeance; it was the following day, when our relief had been effected and we were on the march southward toward the woods near Cohan, that we learned these additional details.

At 8 o'clock the morning of September 7th we took up the march southward, delighted beyond measure when the announcement was made that with other units of the 28th Division well across the Vesle our own relief had been effected, and that the other units would in turn be replaced by the French troops that had streamed northward during the night.

It was a long hike and a hard one, and the sun was unmercifully hot. By noon we were in the debris-strewn woods of Cohan, where the stench of decaying flesh and unburied Germans was still prevalent. We stopped at the Abbaye, north of the woods, and purchased the first Y. M. C. A. supplies we had had in a week—it goes without saying how we enjoyed the cookies and canned prunes which were obtainable.

At that time we had no idea where we were going; there were rumors of a " big rest " somewhere south of the Marne—beyond that we had absolutely no indication of our final destination. It started to rain early in the evening while we were encamped in the woods near Cohan, and it was still raining and the roads were ankle-deep with mud when we pulled out, with heavy, wet packs and partially drenched clothes, at 2 the next morning. It was a Sunday as usual—for we always were hiking on a Sunday " somewhere in France."

So the fourth anniversary of the Battle of the Marne and the first anniversary of our departure from home for the Southland—September 8th—found the boys of the entire regiment on the hike to the historic river itself, amid a drizzle of rain that soaked slickers and made the roads muddy. It was a long pull of about 12 miles, from the woods north of Courmont, after the sun had started mounting in the sky and the coolness of a September morning in France had been dispelled.

It was on this march that I tramped for the last time with Sergeant "Jack" Connell, of Franklin, who was to fall fatally wounded three weeks later in the great Argonne drive. After the column had passed through Courmont, it turned to the left and took a hillside road to Le Charmel Château. By that time cloudy skies had obscured the sun, and a drizzle of rain that kept up all day began falling. For three hours the doughboys rested at the château in the pine woods; over on the opposite hill was the border of the Fôret de Fère, where we had been encamped in our first rush toward the Vesle. The village along the roadside, which we could easily make out without the aid of glasses, was one in which the boys of the 109th and 110th had been hard hit—it was the town of Le Charmel.

Then, at 1 o'clock, after we had had warm coffee and rolled oats, we were on the march again, down the hillside over uneven roads and through the mud—tramping into Jaulgonne, around through Brazy-sur-Marne and into Marcilly. As we left Brazy we saw German signs,

pointing the way to the pontoon bridge which they had thrown across the Marne on July 15th; of course, the pontoons had long since disappeared.

It was nearly 4 o'clock when we reached Marcilly, on the Marne, and meanwhile the rain had increased, and the streets were miserably muddy. The various units of the regiment took up positions on the hillsides about the town, and for two days we stayed there. It was some relief to be out of the range of shellfire, to be in a place where we had no fear of Hun bombing machines. Across the Marne, railroad trains, carrying supplies to the front, passed every now and then—and to us fellows who had seen no locomotives since we left the Paris district during June, they were quite interesting. On Monday, the 9th, just for the sake of the novelty, I went down to the Marne and washed my mess kit. The 10th came, and we were on the march again.

That day, with the exception of the night of August 3d, when we stood in the rain and mud at Chamery, was one of the most miserable and disheartening imaginable. In a driving rain that soaked us before we got started, we pulled out at 6.15 that morning. The farther we marched the worse the rain became. As we went through Passy and Tréloup we saw in the ruins of destroyed churches the big guns by which the Germans had fired shells into the American lines south of Château-Thierry and the Marne River. Naturally, the guns had been disabled before they were abandoned and the breeches were blown open.

There was not a note of cheer in the whole tramp that morning. It was a battle the whole way, fighting against a driving rain and a cold wind. Packs were soaked and made all the heavier; mud was ankle deep, now and then the wagons stuck, but still we pushed on through the Marne valley. Now and then we passed the graves of Huns hastily buried; saw equipment abandoned in the rush to get away from the American forces. Through Vincelles and Verneuil we kept on plodding. We saw Dormans on the other side of the Marne, but did not pass through it, as the bridge, which had been blown up, was not repaired. We crossed the Marne River just south of Verneuil; the bridge was recently constructed and evidently had been hurriedly built after the German retirement from that section.

Then, on the south bank of the Marne, we passed through Try, Troissy and Mareuil le Port. At a little store in this town the fellows bought slices of cheese at a franc or two francs per, and this kept us in hiking trim until the rain stopped early in the afternoon and a halt was made at the top of the hill between Mareuil le Port and Leuvrigny. Unsuccessful efforts were made to dry our clothes during that brief rest period, and then again we were on the tramp, passing through the small village of Chène and then entering the Bois de Boursault. We reached our destination, the hunting lodge, about two kilos from the town of Boursault, and in the woods of Épernay, at 3 o'clock that afternoon; but it was 6 and after before the battalions marched into place—a motley

looking group of soldiers, tired and done out by one of the hardest marches experienced up until that time.

Every man's shoes, no matter how good they were, were filled with water, and we were chilled. Not in days had we felt more miserable than just at that moment. Fires were started, socks and underclothes were changed, and many a boy crawled into his blankets a half hour after he had thrown off his pack. Regimental Headquarters was in the hunting lodge, which became a hotel center for all officers, in fact. Our location at that time and for the next day was just 10 kilos distant from the city of Épernay, toward which the Huns had rushed and which they failed to reach in their Marne drive.

Friday, the 13th—that was quite a day—the trucks that we had boarded the previous evening dumped us off at Blesme-Haussignemont, 50 kilometers south of Châlons-sur-Marne. We had traveled and bumped along the road some 70 miles or more during the night, and we were tired; it is out of the question to get a good sound sleep in French camions when they are making time and when 17 or 18 other fellows are occupying the same truck with you; there is always an awful mixture of arms, legs, packs, equipment—and when a bump is hit—well, it is more of a jumble than ever and everybody wakes up, and in the pitch blackness you can't get straightened around to save your life.

Sarver, of the Supply Company, and I walked down to the station and saw the morning train bound for Vitry-le-François, delighted again to feel the touch of civiliza-

tion. Then, at 11.30, after we had lain along the roadside for three or four hours, we started on the 7-kilo hike to Maurupt et le Montoy, where the Regimental Headquarters was to be located. By 2 we arrived there—out of luck.

Walter Plasterer, of Shippensburg, one of the orderlies, and I ate some hardtack and had some condensed milk which he had purchased; I was dead broke and couldn't have bought a 5-cent sandwich had they existed in France.

We found our little " red village " was one of those which had been blasted to pieces in the drive of 1914; it had few stores, the church had lost its steeple, and there were many tell-tale graves. But the outstanding features were the red roof of every house in the village and the red brick walls of every one that had been rebuilt; truly, it was the " red village " in every respect.

Good old John Kahle staked me to a meal and we walked to Pargny-sur-Saulx, only a few miles away, to get a " feed " that evening. Just at the edge of Maurupt we passed the famous Huguenot brick and tile factory which has helped put Pargny on the map, and whose product every time we were billeted in a barn or the top floor of some old house made us wonder where Pargny was in France. John and I bought bread, canned milk, grapes and a few other " dainties," and these lasted us for twenty-four hours. Other fellows followed our example, for the wagon train was then just taking up the

line of march, and it would be several days before it would get to us.

If the boys of the regiment who had been through the excitement and trying days and nights of endless hiking and fighting in the area north of the Marne ever dreamed that "rest" was to come in this region southeast of Châlons, their ambitions to get sleep and relaxation went flying immediately. Hardly had the units been shown to their billets in the barns of that district than the word was passed "this is no rest period," and steps were taken immediately to equip thoroughly and outfit each command for active participation in the game again.

The billeting areas assigned were: Regimental Headquarters, Headquarters, Machine Gun and Supply Companies, at Maurupt; Companies A, B and C, at Scrupt; Company D, at St. Lumier la Populeus; Companies E, F, G and H, at Sermaize les Bains; Companies I, K, L and M, at Haussignemont (where we had debussed the morning of the 13th).

That day the little store at the corner put up a bulletin, announcing in French, General Pershing's great drive in the St. Mihiel salient, and we felt sure that circumstances then pointed the way to our early participation in that offensive.

The usual training program was prepared, and the boys began drilling on Monday, September 16th, the soldiers playing the game hard until nearly 3 that afternoon. Meantime, the wagon train had not caught up, rations were meager, men fried bacon and ate tomatoes from the

TANK CROSSING BRIDGE AT BOUREUILLES, INTO ARGONNE

Many a doughboy who advanced into the wilderness remembers this main highway bridge. The tank shown in the photo is one of a group used during the first phase of the battle

can, and subsisted on whatever they could get hold of, and the stock of the little store at the corner was soon exhausted. Then it was forbidden to visit Pargny—and so we lived in hopes that the train would arrive the morning of the 17th.

The most pleasant memory of all, during those days, was Saturday, September 14th, when every man was given his May, June and July pay in one fat roll—and then had no place to spend it, unless he slipped over to Pargny to buy cheese and bread, as John Kahle and I managed to do again. The eating problem was a big and vital one those days.

But before we could get a hot meal from our own cookers, word came at 8 o'clock Monday night, the 16th, to be on the way AT ONCE. There was a silent protest from every corner—but doughboys can play the game any hour of the day and night; so it was a fairly jolly company that swung into the dust and out along the pike to Pargny and on the road to Sermaize as the moon was high in the sky, shortly before midnight. The 1st and 3d Battalions were in luck; they went part way by lorry, but all the other units had to make it on foot—a blistering trip that months could not erase from the memories of those who hiked.

Had anybody told us that without the chance to get much sound sleep and without the opportunity to rest from the chilling hike of Marcilly to Épernay forest, not to speak of the busy days before, and then could go through a 32-kilo hike in the direction of some unknown

area, we would have balked, maybe. Every man carried his heavy pack and his full equipment; there was no wagon train to carry the rolls of those who fell out, and if a man became exhausted, he was left "on his own," to shift for himself and catch up when he could.

All night we marched. We halted at Sermaize, the ruins of its wrecked factories and homes a ghastly greeting against the pale moon. Then, through Revigny we marched shortly before daylight, and by the time we got to Laheycourt many a man's legs were wobbly. It was a tough proposition; veteran hikers were dropping out, men were straggling, not a few were swearing—and when a dapper-looking officer from Division Headquarters jumped out of a limousine and forbade the fellows getting a drink and quenching the burning thirst of an all-night tramp at a wayside spring, the climax of criticism was reached. The Fontinette hike had been a joy-killer, but this one was proving more of a record-breaker than even it.

Three kilos north of Laheycourt we flopped on the ground; it was 2 in the afternoon, and we had been marching since 11.20 the night before without a stop of more than ten minutes at any stage. More than that, we were weak from hunger and the sun had become blistering hot; feet ached and burned as seldom before, and blisters grew bigger every minute. The maps showed us that we were in the Fôret de Belnoue, and even then officers and men had little idea where our final destination was to be.

At 8 o'clock the same evening, before the boys had secured a complete rest, they were on the road again. It was up, up and at 'em; the moon came up again, but it was no time to enjoy a beautiful night; its very presence seemed cynical to the fellows who were trying to make the riffle to Bellefontaine, an additional 18 kilos—making a tramp of 50 kilos in two days without any rest or sleep to speak of. They straggled in, in groups of threes and fours, all night and during the next morning; some were still on the road for two and three days following.

It was raining, as usual, when the boys got into the little forest village of Bellefontaine, 25 kilometers southwest of Verdun and in the southern edge of the famous Argonne forest. There was a feeling of elation that we were marching through historic territory—but that was to be dispelled, for the night of the 18th was to find us marching and tramping northward again. What a record!

There we had plugged onward for 32 kilos the night of September 16th–17th to the Fôret de Belnoue.

We had hiked 18 kilos the night of the 17th-18th to Bellefontaine.

Now we were on the march for 12 kilos to another woodland spot, this time a kilo northeast of the hard-to-find village of Le Nefour, in the Argonne region.

Sixty-two kilos in three nights, with practically no sleep; no regular meals, served steaming hot from our cookers; only such things to eat as we could buy at the lit-

tle French stores, where the kindly old lady behind the counter always cried " finis."

However, Warren Brakeman, George Stuchell and I were lucky enough before leaving Bellefontaine to get a heaping dish of French fried potatoes at a little house along the main street of the village; four francs was the reasonable charge for the three of us—and French fries disappeared as if by magic—but that's a foregone conclusion. When a doughboy gets hungry, and hiking is long and wearisome, he hardly knows when to stop eating; that was the predicament we were in—and we made the most of the situation.

By that time our wagon trains were catching up to us, and, as we marched through Le Nefour and went into bivouac on the slopes and in the forest just north of there at midnight, September 18th, the wagons pulled into place a few minutes later. The next morning at 10 o'clock we had a real meal—and all day, in spite of the rain, we felt cheered up on that account. We were crazy for sleep and real rest, but it was to be some time before we got it.

Then it became known that " pursuant to Field Orders 36, 56th Brigade, the 1st Battalion, 112th Infantry, had taken up the line of defense north of the Bois de Châlade."

" Where was that? " we wondered. Then, when we were on the hike again the night of the 19th, marching 12 kilos farther, we found that the 1st Battalion was in position for the jump-off; in other words, it was in the front

line—and the pencil-pushers were also destined for a place there, as well.

To us the rapid march of the fellows from the " rest " area of Maurupt to the wilderness of the Argonne could have but one meaning—there was something doing, that's all. The rush of troops, the hurrying of big guns through that region, and the activities of the few days to follow confirmed our suspicions and helped set the stage for the memorable rush that started September 26th.

That period of preparation, September 20th to 26th, full of tense interest and expectancy, is described in doughboy letters written during those days immediately preceding the jump-off in the Meuse-Argonne offensive. A few of these letters, picked at random, follow:

A Forest in France,
September 20.

It is nightfall, and I am spending another night in the heart of what is probably the biggest war zone forest in France. A rainy day, interspersed with sunshine, has come to an uneventful close, and after a full day's rest—a remarkable experience for this week of numerous marches—we are looking forward to a solid night's sleep in the little sheds or shanties which are built in the hillside throughout this particular valley.

In the days gone by, two and three years ago, this section gained enough prominence to put it into the news columns—so you probably know where we are in a general way by this time; especially, since I see by the

papers that the War Department is keeping the folks at home better informed, so far as location is concerned, than it is possible for us fellows to do and comply with the necessary censorship regulations.

During the past week we have known what it is to live on cold rations entirely, for our wagon train was far behind us. We got a several days' jump on the cookers and wagons by riding on trucks some 70 or 80 miles to a certain point, and then just when it seemed that a warm meal was in sight and the passing of another night would mean a good breakfast, we were unexpectedly on the jump, and every day since has meant hiking. Perhaps I should say every night, for we have done most of our traveling by the light of the moon, braving early morning rains and finding the soft spots in woodlands and French forests.

We struck a little town the other day not many miles back [Bellefontaine]. It was in great contrast to the places we had passed through on the march. It was in the heart of this forest region, and the pursuits of the few inhabitants ran to selling wine, raising cattle and to farming on a small scale. The soldier boys literally took the town by storm, drank all the milk in sight, exhausted the limited wine supply and bought out the stock of goods which the little "epicerie," or general store, carried. Two other boys and myself ordered some French fried potatoes; left the order in the morning and at 5 o'clock that evening we ate two plates full; the bill for the three

of us totaled four francs, or 72 cents, which was indeed reasonable.

The big hit of that day's stay there, however, besides the opportunity to wash and shave, was the visit to the French-American Y. M. C. A., which had warm cocoa for sale. I drank no fewer than three cups of it. Libby's canned milk sufficed for sweetening purposes, and you will be surprised how fond fellows on the hike become of canned milk. For three days some of us boys lived on canned milk, French bread and the baked beans and canned tomatoes issued to us from the supply dump. Some even went so far as to make pancakes—but I never was a good cook, and so when my turn to cook came I merely made coffee and fried bacon, warmed cans of tomatoes and beans, and let it go at that—but we had a good meal one day, nevertheless.

Now, even though we are in the front line again, with prospects of a stay for any length of time, we feel confident we will get plenty to eat, though it may not always be so good as when we are in the back areas. But we were in the back area for such a short time that we are getting used to the trench diet—and the fellows seem to thrive on it, at that. This morning Company D had pancakes, and each man got three. How's that for front line culinary service? You might know how we relished those cakes!

All is going well; I am getting on just the same; some think I am getting fat on the army life, and indeed of late it seems to agree with me, in spite of the few hours of

sleep that it has been possible for us to obtain. But when we do hit the hay, we sleep right through—though to-night, with big rats prevalent in this vicinity—for we have struck the trench rat region at last, after missing it for weeks—I may tell a different story. It was 3 A.M. when I came into this dark valley last night, and even though the moon was out bright and fine and a fellow could read the headlines on a paper as he walked down the road, had he so desired, it was pitch black here—for the tall trees obscured what light there was; it is the same in daytime, the sun does not filter through to a great extent.

This morning, as I went down to the Seven Springs at the cross-roads to wash, I passed through barbed-wire entanglements and over old trenches, of 1915 and 1916 fame, perhaps. I passed several little burros coming up through the mud, their American drivers calling " allez " to them; each burro carried two big cans of water slung over his back. One of our boys made the remark that many a youngster back home would like to have one of the burros, of pony size, for a pet; they are surely splendid little fellows and seem never to get tired.

All this forest seems like toyland—pigmy railroad, for ammunition and supplies; aerial tramway, for the same purpose; little huts and stone houses, several years old, making a veritable cliff colony all along the hillsides of the forest. You have seen all this in pictures, I know; I have, many times—but we fellows are seeing this world-famous region as it is to-day, note what has taken place

and are viewing it now with renewed interest—since we feel that the outfit is here to make new history where other chapters have already been gloriously written by the French.

We are indeed in a remarkable section—different in many respects from the land of the open fighting we had seen before.

Here are trenches used and unused for the past three years; barbed-wire entanglements, some rusted and others new. Guns speak now and then, letting us know that we are in the war zone. For, aside from a bombing expedition from Hunland now and then, we would imagine—by a stretch, I admit—that we were vacationing in the Catskills and looking over this quaint old railing outside into one of the many valleys of New York State. If there has been one remarkable quiet place on the map—liable to become the liveliest at any minute—it is this; a goalpost of interest from start to finish. The most talked-of war forest of France, perhaps; surely, one of its most interesting scenic wonders.

The days to come, and maybe those before this letter gets far on its way, will probably bear out what I have said; we feel it will end that way.

It has been so long since we have seen magazines and papers from home that we do not know what they look like; second-class matter, since we have had an active hand in the game, seems to have been given the go-by and we have counted ourselves lucky to get even first-class once a week—and even that average is not keeping

up well. The person at home little realizes under what difficulties letter-writing is carried on from this end, how there are days of waiting until the mail truck comes to take the mail away; how envelopes, few as they are, get stuck together and how pencils disappear, fountain pens can't be filled and the hundred and one little things of that nature—all little in themselves, but each a contributing factor to the letter-writing business of the American infantry soldier.

But the big story will be written in each youngster's life when he can sit around the fireside back home or out on some front porch in the cool of a summer breeze and tell of those stirring days in France—and the best of the story will be its truth—for it will need no exaggeration to describe all the features, pleasant and disagreeable, heart-rending and heroic, of this game of war. Our fellows have seen all sides of it—and they're men, every one of them.

The candles are burning low; soon they will be out. It is late—8.45 now—and I am tired. With fewer than twelve hours' sleep in four days, I am going to tumble in. I long for the day to come when I can break in again, and plug on. Meanwhile, I am carrying on, as you would have me, over here—cheerful, uncomplaining, hiking with a vengeance, eating with an appetite only perfect health knows and smiling when the downs threaten to have an inning with the ups. Cheerful—that's the catch-word for the whole outfit. Every man feels added pride, too,

that he fought in the now famous Second Battle of the Marne and went to the Vesle River and beyond. Great days those were, but greater ones are coming.

Woods of France, On the Line,
6 p.m., Wednesday, September 25.

As I write the wheels are being set in motion for a great attack. Rumor has it that it will come early to-morrow morning; scores upon scores of big guns will let loose, and then the whole fabric of the war game will be in full play—tanks, gas, artillery and our boys. For a whole week the stage was in process of being set.

Just now it is quiet; few shells are falling. It is as quiet as any woods back home; little does this quiet mean, however—for we believe that after to-night, there will be but little sleep. Things have been rushing in more ways than one; details are not possible, but we have all been busy; and if plans go well, our good old outfit will go down into history as having played a prominent part in the game. It will be our boys who are first through the wire and over the top; it will be the fellows from our regiment who will bear the brunt of the melée—and God will be with us, we feel sure. I write these few lines before all hell lets loose; they will not start homeward, though, until after the thing has been done—and the game is on.

The boys are on their toes, expectancy rules, and the last man is ready. We eat to-night for the last time at our own individual mess; after that we will be back eating

with the wagon train and wherever we can get something to eat, for that matter.

Surely this is the calm before the storm. The day—cool, with an occasional drizzle; now and then some aeroplane circling overhead, the last one we saw being OURS—one with a Keystone and the Number 10; this is the first of that type we had seen. Then shells burst now and then; but it will be on the morrow, perhaps, when a different scene will be presented; and so we all hope that we may live through it all, to keep up the chase of the Hun, who we believe will be started on the run once again.

In due time it will be announced—long before my letter gets home—where we have been in the scrap; and so you can feel sure that Pennsylvania boys have once again given a good account of themselves in another sector. If we don't, then we won't be here to tell the tale.

WOODS OF FRANCE, ON THE LINE,
11 P.M., WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25.

The greatest drumfire we have ever heard has just opened. Right on the dot, at 11 o'clock, it began. Early in the morning at zero hour our boys are over the top. The hour is whispered now—it is to be 5.30 A.M. Tanks, aeroplanes, all manner of war machines, will be in the scrap, too, to support our own men.

It is 11.15 now—the pounding and battering up the line grows louder; our first columns are on the march, our first men to "jump off." This rear Regimental P. C. seems quite deserted. A half-dozen candles are flickering

here; a few of us are back, waiting for the word that the game is on in earnest and for the order, which will come soon after daylight, perhaps, to move.

It is hard to describe the feeling of this battle. It is to be so different from the others we have been in; none of us have yet seen the tanks and yet they are here—American tanks at that. At the last minute The American Aviators—" fighters of the air " they dub themselves —sent a characteristic appeal in real American " pep " slang to the doughboys on the ground, but most of our men were on the move or getting ready to start forward when this arrived.

It read:

From the American Scrappers of the Air to the American Soldiers on the Ground:

Doughboys: While you are giving the Boche hell on the ground, we are helping you to the limit in the air.

The artillery are behind you, anxious to help with their shells.

Headquarters is trying, through us, to keep in close touch with you and to render aid whenever you are checked or outnumbered.

Keep us posted at all times as to where your front lines are.

Your signals enable us to take news of your location to the rear; to report if the attack is successful, to call for help if needed, to enable the artillery to put their shells over your head into the enemy.

If you are out of ammunition and tell us, we will report it and have it sent up; if you are surrounded, we will deliver the ammunition by airplane.

We do not hike through the mud with you, but there are discomforts in our work as bad as mud, but we won't let rain, storms, Archies nor Boche planes prevent our getting there with the goods.

Use us to the limit. After reading this, hand it to your Buddie and—remember to show your signals.

(Signed) YOUR AVIATORS.

History will be written again within the next few days—at least in this hitherto so-called quiet sector; our Catskills ravine will be in the midst of the fray at the start, but after that our boys will be far beyond. The Battle of the Great Woods we must know it for the time being until the War Department gives it an official title; our fellows can then feel with some little pride they have been in the Second Battle of the Marne and in this one now starting—one with such great possibilities, one which will carry us closer to the German frontier, one in which our boys are to see all features of the war game, every conceivable contrivance—I cannot list them all. I can just tell you that hell is letting loose; by morning it will seem like a thousand hells in one.

We are calm. I have finished a strenuous day's work, and things are in order now for the word that will send us office fellows up. This is the first time I have been left behind at the rear office, as at all other times I have gone up to the forward P. C. when the boys went into the line. It is to be a weird night, but I have faith and hope in seeing another day. In that prayer and placing my trust in Him who lovingly guides us all in this great but terrible game, I say good-night.

It is 11.30 now. More guns are pounding, sending shells into "Germany." The drumfire grows louder every minute. It looks like little sleep or none to-night; somewhere on the road our boys are nearing their destination.

Here I am going to try for a little sleep, for I have been at the machine without let-up since 8 this morning; it has been a pretty hard grind all day.

9 A.M., SEPTEMBER 26.

All is well. The sun is shining. We are waiting for the first reports from our boys up "there." They have gone over the top long ago. The guns are still pounding. So dead tired that I never even looked for a dugout, but slept under this desk through the bombardment from 12.30 to 8 this morning.

THE BIG WOODS IN FRANCE,
MORNING, SEPTEMBER 26.

This day goes down in history.

Our entire outfit, stretched over a two-kilometer front and occupying the center of the battle-line, went over the top this morning.

Unofficial word comes back at this hour, 10.30, that the boys have made several kilos and are still going.

The great game is on in earnest again.

Great drumfire opened at 11 last night, reaching the crescendo about 3 and pounding the daylights out of Hunland until 5; then it slackened, but still the guns are pounding away. Tanks are in action, American aeroplanes are helping our fellows and the boys themselves are "there."

There is not much more to say just now; it will be several days before the full reports are in, and even this

bunch of office men will be on the march before many hours. It is the first time since the boys have gone to the front line that I was not detailed to the advance P. C. just back of the front line; I was up there for three or four days last week, but was sent back after the stage was set.

THE BIG WOODS IN FRANCE,
SEPTEMBER 27.

"Americans and French Smash Enemy on Champagne Front; Yanks Advance Seven Miles; Keystone and Western Troops Take Many Towns and 5000 Men."

That's the way the *New York Herald* describes the first day of the big battle, in the paper this morning—and we could hardly wait until we read the details about the push in which our outfit is participating. Then to have it announced the very first day that Pennsylvania outfits are in the struggle—that capped the climax and set a new mark. The *Herald* said it was an "innovation," but it was more than that. It characterized the artillery preparation as "unparalleled"; we guessed that; and then in glowing terms it spoke of the fellows who had made such a splendid gain on the first day of the September 26th push, and who are now still "going to it."

I can almost picture the excitement back home when the word was flashed that our fellows were into the thick of it again—in the forefront of battle, racing down hill and over valley, yelling like Indians, bayonets glinting in the morning sunlight (for I told you that the day

LINE OF SQUAREHEADS ADVANCING REARWARD

A few of the hundreds of Germans taken in the Argonne drive by the 28th Division. This particular group is passing La Forge, Advance P. C. of the division. Picture was taken October 4th

brought the first sunshine we had seen in ten days). Zero hour was 5.30, so far as the infantry was concerned—and over the top they went, without a signal. Then through the brush, dodging among the trees—passing first the German front line and then the German second line trenches and capturing prisoners all the way. It was more like a big football rush than a battle; prisoners came easily, and before night there were scores of them going down the road.

"How does it feel to be captured?" one of the company cooks asked a big German. And the fellow replied, in his own tongue: "It suits me all right, partner; this is better than fighting." Some carried little boxes with their personal possessions, others had a good share of their equipment on their backs; but none was in the least disgruntled over the turn of events.

Our own boys had a rough section of the country to cover—rougher than the rest of the line, we are told, and yet they made splendid headway and fearlessly forged ahead. Casualties were almost negligible—and it was, as I have said, more like a great race with the goal (retreating Huns) ever in sight, and batches of prisoners being the posts marking the way. The guns are booming more than ever to-day and so, even without direct news from the front, we know that our brave fellows are at it again, advancing their lines—and at the same time making more history.

CHAPTER XIV

THE ADVANCE IN THE ARGONNE

The Rôle That the 112th Played From September 26th to October 9th—Battle for Le Chêne Tondu, Capture of Châtel Chéhery and Hill 244—Commendations and Winning of the Red Keystone.

In the pages of history that America has written in France there stands one name suggestive of individual bravery, of splendid morale under trying conditions, of doggedly pursuing the Hun despite many temporary machine gun obstacles; that is the battle of the Argonne—in itself part of the great Meuse-Argonne offensive which was Germany's death-blow.

Two divisions were assigned the task of clearing the Argonne forest itself—the 77th, with a front of six kilometers, and the 28th, with a front of four, on the morning of the jump-off, September 26th. The 77th was on the left flank of the 56th Brigade; to the right of the 55th Brigade of the 28th Division was the 35th; then stretching out in an easterly line came the 91st, 37th, 79th, 4th, 80th and 33d Divisions, all in position and participating in the attack of the first day.

General Pershing gives equal praise to twenty-two divisions he mentions as having played a valorous part in that great struggle, and so it is not the purpose of this chapter to make it appear that the 28th did more than any other division on the fighting line; it played its own

part, the tasks assigned to it were carried out with dispatch; the ground was cleared in a masterly manner, and men, fatigued by long marches, without food and fighting on, not knowing when the relief was coming, gave such a brave account of themselves that their deeds, not always recorded in glowing headlines, will live years afterward.

The rôle that the 112th Infantry played in the Argonne was intensely heroic; its conduct under fire was what might have been expected following such actions as those about the Marne and along the Vesle; it was in the Argonne, perhaps more than on any other sector, that the fighting qualities of the men who made up the old 8th and 16th Regiments from the Keystone State were best demonstrated.

Every battalion was in the line on the day of the jump-off; every battalion, with ranks depleted, was in the division front on the day of the relief, October 9th. For more than thirteen days, every hour and every step of the march through underbrush and in the face of machine gun nests which had to be subdued, it was on the job—night as well as day. Suffering heavy casualties after the first great rush, yet pushing everlastingly forward, persistently beating the German back from one patch of woods to another, attacking two and three times a day, the 112th, as well as every other unit of the 28th Division in the line played the big game well.

The American attack in the Argonne, along the Aire and in the Meuse valley came as a surprise to the Hun.

It is a matter of historical record that the Germans who occupied the trenches some few hundred yards from our front line did not know that American soldiers were in that sector until the Germans were captured and the Yanks pushed far beyond the second German line in the first rush into Hun territory. The Germans admitted that they were looking for a French shove, but had not suspected any but the French would be involved.

Every precaution had been taken to keep the plans and preparations as secret as possible; when American officers went to the front to reconnoiter, they wore the blue French helmet and the long, blue French field coat—just as at St. Mihiel, before Pershing's First Army plunged against the salient and broke it off in a record three-day shove.

When heavy guns were taken forward, when tanks moved up to their position, when men marched to areas near the location for the jump-off, the same secrecy was observed; the traffic was at night; by day, the tall, closely growing trees of the forest camouflaged the strength and the character of the forces.

The final hike that brought the 1st Battalion into the front line in the Ravine de la Brigade meant an additional 12 kilos from Le Nefour, on the night of September 19th—making a total of 74 kilometers, or more than 46 miles, traversed in four days, with scarcely more than six hours' sleep during 96 hours of activity—a record no doughboy, even in the best of spirits, would care to repeat with such a pack as he carried then. It had been a hike

through mud and rain, as well as on fair moonlight nights, with no warm rations.

The 112th Infantry went into the Argonne Forest with Major Charles B. Smathers in active command, Colonel Rickards having been assigned to the Brigade since September 6th. On September 21st, Lieut.-Colonel John P. Bubb, a Regular Army man, who had seen service in Pershing's thrust in the St. Mihiel salient, was assigned to the regiment, and so when the time came for the outfit to go over the top, it went into action under a strange commander.

This, however, does not mean that Colonel Bubb was at all strange to the military game. He took hold of affairs with a firm hand and within a comparatively short while was familiar with the organization of the regiment and its personnel. He made several minor changes, relative to staff work on the line and at the last minute abolished the runner chain which had seen valued service along the Vesle and called in a new group of men picked from the Headquarters Company.

Colonel Bubb was still dictating the field order, in accordance with specifications and maps brought in several hours before from Headquarters 28th Division, when Lieut. Howard K. Gibson reported to Regimental Headquarters shortly after 9 o'clock on the night of September 25th and announced that Brigade had received the H hour, and it would soon be made known to regimental commanders. The long order, replete with military details, was immediately "choked," and only that

part already dictated was hurriedly pounded out on the typewriter for the battalion commanders, and a few minutes after 10 they not only had copies of the order, but knew the exact hour at which their men were to go over the top on the morning of September 26th.

It is a part of history that the jump-off took place at 5.30, after the heaviest barrage known to any soldiers on the western front. The massing of artillery in the Argonne, night after night, and the great stores of shells that had been rushed forward in a seemingly endless stream had all been for a purpose; and when hell let loose at 11 the night of the 25th, plenty of damage resulted in the first and second German line trenches, in spite of their depth and their concrete emplacements.

Pushing north, the entire regiment fought its way toward the Côte des Perrières, the 3d Battalion being the first to reach the near slopes of the wooded hill. Two companies of the 2d were working in the same general direction; the remaining companies of the regiment became lost in the woods and finally advanced up the valley of the Aire until they reached the German wire, then proceeded through the German trench systems to the foot of the Côte des Perrières. So, by 4 that afternoon, every company of the 112th was well in position on the southern slope of the hill. New orders called for an attack at 7.15 that evening, but this was postponed on account of darkness. In the first day's fighting the regiment had made a gain of two kilometers through the most heavily defended part of the Argonne Forest—through posi-

tions claimed by the Germans and admitted by the French, up until that time, to be impregnable.

There had been casualties, but the number had been so few that first day that they were hardly noticeable. Second Lieut. Thomas A. Elgin, of Company K, was gassed. He was the only officer hurt.

The artillery had done its work well; trenches and strongpoints were found unguarded, and the taking of prisoners was comparatively easy. The 3d Battalion got no fewer than 62 during the morning. When Lieut. Frank Fleming jumped into a German trench with his platoon, he found more than forty Huns lined up for breakfast, not entirely expecting an American attack. They were taken prisoners, and started on the way back to the provisional " pen " at Corps Headquarters.

By late in the afternoon the prisoners taken by the 28th were streaming back to the rear under guard, not at all discouraged with the situation. Some wore their " squarehead " helmets, others the field gray fatigue.cap with the red band; some were eating American hardtack, a few smiled—but for the most part, the customary blank look of the captured " squarehead " was the pronounced feature of the informal parade rearward. Up in the forest were others of their comrades who had already paid the price of the first day's thrust by those Americans who knew nothing of the war game except to attack and keep on pushing.

The regiment attacked at daybreak on the 27th, the 3d and 1st Battalions with the Machine Gun Company

around the eastern slope of Côte des Perrières, the 2d Battalion around the western slope. The direction of attack was such as to close the vise north of the hill, but after an advance of a kilometer, and meeting with heavy resistance, the attacking elements withdrew in the afternoon to the southern slope of Côte des Perrières, in view of later operations farther north. These called for a flanking movement up the valley of the Aire.

Shortly after dark a movement was begun by the entire regiment from the Côte des Perrières, via the road through Varennes, and then northeastward up the Aire valley to La Forge, and later south of Montblainville, at which place the column turned into the ravine to the west and formed up for attack.

This movement, in effect, was the opening of the costliest and hardest fought struggle in the Argonne in which the 112th Infantry engaged; the battle for the ridge of Le Chène Tondu. The direction of attack was to the northeast. The 2d Battalion had remained in position on the western slope of Côte des Perrières to cover the withdrawal, and so did not rejoin the other units of the regiment in the Depot Ravine until the afternoon of September 28th.

It was in the attack of the morning that the regiment lost its capable Intelligence Officer, First Lieut. Raymond Abel. At the head of the regimental Intelligence Section, Abel was pushing ahead of the troops when German machine gunnners opened fire. Jumping into a shellhole with the rest of his detachment, he sought cover

for a few seconds. Emerging again into the open, Abel gasped, " My God, boys," and fell dead at their feet, with a bullet above his heart.

His was the first death of any 112th officer in the Argonne; in the strenuous days to follow other brave men dropped to rise no more before a withering fire from enemy machine guns, in time cleaned out and their operators accorded the fate they deserved.

Second Lieut. Frederick I. McKelvey, of Company M, sustained a severe machine gun wound in the same action.

On the morning of the 28th the regiment attacked the Chène Tondu from its position in the Depot Ravine, advancing about a kilometer when it encountered heavy machine gun fire. When the 2d Battalion moved into position shortly after noon, a new attack was planned. Preceded by a heavy machine gun barrage put down by the 107th and 109th Machine Gun Battalions, the regiment went over the top at 4 o'clock, with the 2d, 3d and 1st Battalions on the line, in the order named. The 1st Battalion proceeded without any difficulty, while the 2d, occupying the left flank, was held up by heavy machine gun fire.

As the 112th approached the crest of Chène Tondu, more heavy fighting was encountered, but ultimately this was overcome, at the cost of some casualties, and the enemy positions on the crest were occupied and consolidated during the night. The 1st Battalion had captured seventeen prisoners, the 2d fourteen and the 3d three—

and the entire regiment had advanced two kilometers through the German lines! The Machine Gun Company was still operating with the 1st Battalion, as on the day previous, and the trench mortar platoon of the Headquarters Company continued to do effective work against enemy positions with the 2d. It was during this attack that Captain Joseph P. Connell was wounded in the arm by enemy machine gun fire, and First Lieut. Frederick O. Blankenship, of Company L, was killed. The news of Blankenship's death brought home the fact that the Argonne was taking a heavy toll.

The dawning of another day, the 29th, proved that Le Chène Tondu, despite its capture, was not the safest place in the world. Swept by enemy artillery and machine gun fire, it claimed too great a price to retain it for long, and shortly after daybreak, under orders of Colonel Conger, then in command of the 56th Infantry Brigade, the 1st and 3d Battalions were withdrawn from the ridge to the foot of the southern slope. The 3d Battalion and Machine Gun Company attempted an attack around the eastern edge of Chène Tondu, and this was repulsed by machine gun fire from the heights west of Aprémont. The 2d Battalion, meanwhile, was holding its own and retaining its position on the ridge, until 4 in the afternoon, and the 111th Infantry moved up to assume those positions left by the 112th; immediately the 1st Battalion of the 112th was ordered to advance on the Chène Tondu in support of a battalion of the 111th, and on reaching the crest it was found necessary to put two companies in

the line to protect the flanks of the 111th Infantry. The other units of the regiment were ordered to the Depot Ravine, to remain in support.

That day Chêne Tondu had claimed the lives of such officers as Captain Hugh R. Doane, of Company H, famed as a bayonet instructor at Camp Hancock; Second Lieut. Randall S. Houghton, of Company A, recently promoted from the ranks; and, ultimately, First Lieut. Frank R. Fleming, Company M, and Second Lieut. Walter J. Flynn, Company D, both severely wounded in the engagement. Other officers who were wounded included: First Lieut. Frederick L. Pond, Company B, and Second Lieut. Hoyt R. Ogram, Company D, indicating that the 1st Battalion was being hard hit. Four days of the hardest kind of fighting, nerve-racking and exhausting, had begun wearing on the men. September 28th and 29th had proved hard days in the line, with casualties on the increase, machine gun nests more bothersome than before—but through it all, the 112th never lost heart.

Colonel Rickards, walking with a decided limp and barely able to get about, reached the rear P. C. of the regiment, a mile behind the jump-off line, on Sunday morning, September 29th. Late on the night of September 27th, on his way from one headquarters to another, he had been bumped off the side of the road by an artillery caisson and thrown down a 15-foot embankment, sustaining internal injuries. Suffering intense pain and with one leg so crippled that he could not walk

much, Colonel Rickards refused to be evacuated, and only when the pain became unbearable, late on the night of the 28th, did he consent to telephone Division Headquarters, and Colonel Conger was sent to replace him as Brigade Commander. Before he was evacuated to the Field Hospital at Les Islettes, Colonel Rickards told the force at the rear P. C. how the game was going up the line.

" It has been worse than hell," he said. " It has been a fight for existence all the way, but we are getting out of the woods now, and things will go better. If I was sniped at once, I was sniped at a dozen times, and one rifle bullet which passed my nose was fired by a German I feel confident who was not more than fifty feet from me. That was the closest call of all, and I didn't have even an automatic with me."

He told of thirteen Germans lying along the road taking things easy following their capture. Four Yanks came along bearing a wounded man on a stretcher. The Colonel, intent on keeping the Hun busy, spoke to his aide and without delay the latter told the Huns in their own tongue, " Get up and carry that stretcher to the rear," and the whole thirteen bounded to their feet at once, their faces wreathed in smiles.

Late that afternoon Colonel Rickards was taken in the regimental car to Les Islettes, and despite his optimistic prediction that he would be back in a day or so, his injuries were such that he never returned to the Argonne. The ligaments of several ribs had been torn, in addition

to the injury to the one leg—and he was confined to bed for more than ten days, visited each day, however, by his faithful orderly, Sergeant Roger Bauwin, of Kittanning, and his chauffeur, Harry D. Shriver, of Harrisburg.

Meanwhile, there were many stories coming back from the front; many rumors coming from the rear. It was at this time that the Metz rumor gained currency; that the Americans had taken Metz and 40,000 prisoners, and that the war was soon to end. To men who had gone two and three days at a time without a cooked meal and who were looking for some relief from the strenuous work of the front line, this came like a blessing—but it wasn't true. Yet it reached the men up the line, and they fought all the harder to bring the activities on their front to an end—and little did anyone then engaged in the Argonne campaign realize just how far the doughboys were to travel and how much still remained to be done until the Armistice Day was to come.

The story is told of a Colonel of the Southwest, who spoke with a distinctly Southern accent, stumbling into Brigade Headquarters on the night of September 28th, adding that he was "powerfully hungry, tired and the Germans haven't been any too kind to me." He was six and a half feet tall, thin as a rail and wore a German coat. As officers scurried around and proceeded to share their meager repast with him, he told his story.

Two nights before he and two members of his staff had been riding some distance ahead of the column. Before they realized where they were, they had gone too far on

the woodland highway, and Germans seized them as prisoners, put them in a shellhole and then, instead of placing a guard over them, put two machine guns in place, some distance from the hole, so that the guns could crossfire at will. Every now and then a machine gun bullet would whiz over the crater, followed by several from the other gun—and not one of the trio dared put his head above the rim. The Colonel finally decided to make a break for it, but the other two, not willing to take the chance, said they would remain behind. Waiting for a moment in the darkness which he thought particularly opportune, he crawled over the rim and made a dash for the woods. If any bullets were fired, they missed him. He bumped into a German officer of his own height wearing a heavy coat —" and when I got through arguing with him," the Colonel added, " the German wasn't in need of any." For a day and a half he crept through the Argonne, hiding in the brush, dodging machine gun nests and keeping under cover. At last, he reached the American lines on the night of the 28th, located the Brigade Headquarters and told his story.

With the American wounded streaming back from the Argonne, mainly over the highway that runs from Varennes, through Neuvilly to Les Islettes, the Y. M. C. A. and the Salvation Army got into action. The Y, under the direction of J. Campbell Brandon, a Butler lawyer, who had been with the 28th at Camp Hancock and overseas as well, set up a rolling kitchen in the ruins at Varennes and passed out hot cocoa free of charge

to the wounded as they trudged back. To these and to men in the ambulances they liberally gave cigarettes and tobacco; and at Neuvilly the Salvation Army, true to tradition, was baking doughnuts and flinging flapjacks at record-breaking rates.

Three more days of activity in the Argonne—September 30th, October 1st and 2d—were days of battling for Le Chène Tondu, still swept by fire directed upon it from enemy strongholds in hills to the north. On the last day of September the 1st Battalion was busy coöperating with the 111th Infantry on the crest of the ridge, while in the valley below other units of the regiment had made every preparation to meet a German counter-attack if one came.

On the next morning the Machine Gun Company and 2d Battalion moved into support positions behind the 111th and established liaison with the 77th Division on the left. The 3d Battalion had orders to attack around the eastern slope of Le Chène Tondu. This attack commenced at 6 o'clock and was proceeding under these orders when it met part of a general German counter-attack along the entire battle-front—this, the last determined counter-offensive that the Huns launched in the Argonne Forest. The 28th Division played its full share in repulsing the attack; after two hours of heavy fighting in the 112th area, the struggle had been decided. Second Lieut. Walter V. Agin, one of the new Company D officers, was killed, and the casualties among enlisted men were comparatively large, however. The 3d Battalion

withdrew to the position in Depot Ravine at 2 in the afternoon, upon confirmation that the attack had been repulsed on both flanks.

On October 2d the 1st Battalion was withdrawn from the crest of Chène Tondu and took up positions with the other elements; and as luck would have it, Jerry let loose with his artillery from Hills 244 and 223 and the Bois de Cornay; and played " merry hell " with troops in Depot Ravine. Despite this period of shellfire, vigorous patrols were carried out and sent forward for the purpose of feeling out the enemy strength. It was during this action that Second Lieut. Philip E. Kriechbaum, of Company C, was killed, having been picked off by a German sniper. Among those officers wounded in action were First Lieut. Cecil R. Everett, of Company B, who was gassed; and Second Lieut. Percy W. LaPaze, of Company A, sent to the rear with a gunshot wound. First Lieut. Frank L. Ruffing, in command of the 2d Battalion since the evacuation of Captain Miller on October 1st, and Second Lieut. Victor Volz, of Company F, became hospital cases in the action of the following day, both wounded by gunfire. Volz was carrying loose pistol ammunition in his trousers pockets; hit by a piece of shell, this exploded, inflicting terrible injury, and his death followed shortly afterward.

Lieut.-Colonel Bubb having been relieved of his command on September 30th, Major Smathers had once more resumed command of the 112th, directing the efforts of October 1st and 2d. It was during this period

of trying the clear the woods about Le Chène Tondu that Major-General Charles Muir visited the front, looked over the 112th territory and with characteristic sarcasm, well-meant but not always well-chosen, exclaimed:

"Major, your men are a bunch of damned cowards! They can't advance!"

Major Smathers straightened, his face flushed a little despite its pallor, and he replied in a calm voice, with plenty of emphasis:

"No man, not even a Major-General, will call my men cowards. Look for yourself. Look at those men——"

And as he spoke he pointed to twenty-four doughboys, lying prone on the ground, their faces to the foe —dead.

"Those are not cowards, sir; the 112th is up against a serious proposition, but it is giving a good account of itself, and will continue to advance."

General Muir had no reply. Doughboys who happened to be in the immediate vicinity at that time spread the story by "wireless," and Major Smathers' popularity grew several hundred per cent. in almost no time. He had no thought of danger and was with his men every hour of the day and night, sharing those sleepless vigils which were part of the life of the front line and only some of the many hardships of those days of the Argonne.

No one is likely to forget either how Colonel Bubb went over the top and advanced with the runner chain before the regiment got started, or how little he seemed

to care for the half dozen or so machine guns that seemed to be sniping at him every time he emerged into the open. Braver men than Colonel Bubb, Major Smathers and finally Lieut.-Colonel James A. Shannon, who came to command the regiment on October 3d, were not known to the 112th during those days. They were men—white clear through, as the doughboy says, and they'd go the limit; their conduct was an inspiration at all times, and their bravery, as that of Colonel Rickards, has not always been given the credit it deserves; the men who went through the Argonne under their command know the real story and it will never die.

October 3d found the 2d Battalion leaving its position in the valley to go to the support of the 111th on Chène Tondu; meanwhile the other units of the regiment were marched up the Montblainville-Aprémont Road, reporting to the Commanding General of the 55th Brigade, in compliance with other orders. Other orders, however, were received, and when the head of the column reached Aprémont, the men turned about and retraced their steps to Depot Valley.

At an officers' conference held at midnight, orders were issued for the carrying out of an attack on the morning of October 4th, in a northerly direction, between the 111th Infantry, on the ridge, and the 77th Division, on their left. The column moved in the following order: 2d and 3d Battalions, Machine Gun Company and 1st Battalion. The 2d moved forward, took up the assigned position between the 111th Infantry and the 77th Divi-

sion, and then the supporting battalions withdrew to the Depot Ravine, to remain there during the day. Late that afternoon, however, they moved westward around the foot of Chène Tondu, arriving at the cross-roads north of the cemetery on the crest after dark, and held the position during the night. Regimental Headquarters was established in a former German hospital; and the domination of the ridge was at last complete and undisputed.

Following out the plan of cleaning out machine gun nests and improving the immediate front, the 2d Battalion attempted an attack through the 111th at 9 o'clock the morning of the 5th, moving forward in a northwesterly direction. The 1st and 3d Battalions were being formed for an assault as well, when orders came to expedite the movement around the south side of Chène Tondu and advance up the valley of the Aire River to Aprémont, in support of the 55th Brigade. This movement was executed and the 1st and 3d Battalions took up position on the hillside west of the river, immediately south of Aprémont, remaining there during the day and that night. At 2 in the afternoon the 2d Battalion was withdrawn from its position on the ridge, and three hours later had joined the remainder of the regiment near Aprémont. The entire movement was executed with the idea of attacking Châtel Chéhery and Hill 244 by a movement through the 55th Brigade sector.

The importance of these positions cannot be overestimated; from Châtel Chéhery and its dominating ridges, Hills 244 and 223, to the west, as well as the Bois

de Cornay, the Hun had been hurling his largest caliber shells into the fastnesses of the Argonne, raining shrapnel and death on the shallow trenches and funk-holes, as well as upon the supply dump at Montblainville and the wagon train located in that vicinity. Roadways, filled at night with troops bound for the line, crowded at other hours with walking wounded and traffic, were openly exposed to this shellfire; thus the clearing of these positions of all Germans meant a distinct forward step in the clearing of the whole Argonne Forest. Chène Tondu and its persistent machine gun nests, as well as the patches of woods adjoining, had been taken—and now there remained one more master stroke in the part of the 28th Division.

That night of the 5th Colonel Shannon and the battalion commanders of the 112th formed a patrol and reconnoitered the Aire valley to Châtel Chéhery. This revealed that the town was still held by the Germans and that the country on the left bank of the Aire was well patrolled by the Boche—so well patrolled, in fact, that the officers' patrol ran into a Jerry party and had difficulty in returning to Aprémont intact. The attack had been planned for the early morning of the 6th, but the officers' patrol had to fight its way out and was so delayed in returning that the attack was postponed until the 7th.

Patrol activity to the northwest of Aprémont featured the duties of the 6th, and the same reports were returned: Hills 244 and 223 and the town of Châtel

HILL 244 AND PART OF CHÂTEL CHÉHERY

This view, taken from the church spire of the town, gives an adequate idea of the ground over which the 112th Infantry had to advance in the face of machine gun and rifle fire on the morning of October 7th

Chéhery were held in force. German artillery had not let up to any noticeable extent, and continued to inflict casualties through heavy shelling of the positions about Aprémont and the vicinity of La Forge; but our own guns were answering by firing on Châtel Chéhery, Hills 244 and 223 and the intermediate ridge.

Had the original plan of attack been carried out, it would have meant merely a local attack on Hill 244. Instead, this was changed to a major operation—an attack by the 28th and the 82d Divisions, for the purpose of forcing an evacuation of the Argonne Forest. Definite orders were received at midnight on the 6th, outlining the 112th's objectives as Hill 244 and that part of the town at the base of the hill. The order of battle, from right to left, read: 2d, 1st and 3d Battalions, Machine Gun Company. To the 110th was assigned the task of clearing the northern part of the town and Hill 223.

The 112th left Aprémont at 3 in the morning, and under the cover of darkness, took up positions along the river bank. The attack itself was launched at 5 o'clock, in a heavy fog, under cover of an artillery and machine gun barrage. The 2d and 1st Battalions entered Châtel Chéhery, and the 1st Battalion continued to the west, up Hill 244, meeting with heavy resistance from machine gunners and grenades. The 2d, having attained its objective, remained in Châtel Chéhery in support.

Meanwhile, the 3d Battalion had followed closely the preliminary artillery barrage, and advanced on the enemy positions on Hill 244 as the barrage rolled forward a hun-

dred yards every four minutes. German machine guns and snipers kept up a raking fire from the strongholds on Hills 244 and 223, but by 8.30 the positions on the ridges were consolidated.

Perhaps at no other time during the Argonne thrust had the fighting assumed a more spectacular character than about Hill 244, where undaunted soldiers climbed hand over hand up the cliff in order to make secure the possession of the slopes and the crest of that strongly held German position. Wire that had remained untouched by the heavy fire from American guns had to be cut, and this was done only after heavy losses.

At 7 that morning, as he watched the attack proceeding, Lieut.-Colonel Shannon was shot through the neck by a German sniper as he stood in the doorway of a building facing the ridge; he was carried away only to die a short while later as he was being taken to a field hospital in an ambulance. Captain Reynolds, who had come to the regiment at the same time as Colonel Shannon, had also been wounded, though not fatally, and Lieut. Shatzer then took command of the 2d Battalion. Captain Graff became acting commander of the regiment; Second Lieut. McKinney was in charge of the 1st and Captain William Smith commanded the 3d Battalion.

The regiment had lost so heavily that in some cases sergeants commanded companies and corporals were in charge of platoons. The 112th had gone into the Argonne with a strength of 77 officers and 2892 men; it

came out of the action with only 10 officers and 533 men left in the front line.

While the 3d Battalion was devoting its attention to Hill 244, the 1st had fought its way through the southern part of the town, capturing twelve prisoners, and was attacking the hill from the east and north. The arrival of the 327th Regiment of the 82d Division at 12.35 then freed the 2d Battalion for a flanking operation, and the advance was continued. To the 2d Battalion was assigned the task of proceeding to the cross-roads immediately south of Drachen, and losing no time, it reached that 244 stronghold at 2 in the afternoon. Here machine gun fire held up its advance until the day following.

The 1st and 3d Battalions meanwhile maintained their positions on Hill 244, and on the morning of the 8th participated in the final mopping-up. During the afternoon these units, together with the Machine Gun Company, were withdrawn from the ridge under a plan to attack westward, through the valley south of Hill 223; at the last minute, however, these plans were changed, and it was decided to maintain a force on Hill 244. However, the 1st Battalion, under command of Lieut. William E. Franks, had advanced under the previous orders and reached its objective on the railroad two kilometers west of Châtel Chéhery at 9.30 that night, October 8th —a position approximately a kilometer in advance of any other unit of the 28th Division. It was able to hold and consolidate its position until the time of its relief on October 9th.

Late in the day the 2d was called in from the left flank and took up the old position on Hill 244. There was no minimizing the fact that day that the 110th and 112th Regiments had accomplished in two days' fighting far more than could reasonably be expected of them after more than ten days of the hardest fighting they had ever seen. One likes to think, then, of what Colonel Frederick Palmer has said in *Collier's:*

> For a week the 28th had fretted against the formidable Taille l'Abbé, with its only avenue of approach open fields under the eyes of waiting machine gunners. Now it worked its way around this frowning obstacle and it crossed the Aire and took Châtel Chéhery with its storming parties, making sure that at least one height, Hill 244, would not enfilade the 1st any further. The 28th had been in that infernal trough of the Aire for two weeks at a cost of 4000 casualties; but before it was relieved it had finally cleaned the last of the Germans out of the thickets, the Abbé Woods, which had been the nightmare of its Argonne career. Some people were calling it the Iron Division. Steel is tempered iron. The 28th was tempered in the Aire Valley. After the Aire the Susquehanna or the Monongahela ought to look pleasant.

The orders for the relief of the entire 28th Division reached the 112th advance P. C. shortly after the arrival of Colonel Blanton Winship, the new commander, at 6.30 o'clock, and by 5 on the morning of October 9th, all, except the 1st Battalion, had been relieved by corresponding units of the 82d Division. The 1st was relieved two and a half hours later. A merciful fog helped save the day, and there were few casualties as the 112th found its way to positions a kilometer south of Montblainville.

The nightmare of the Argonne was over at last, but the ghosts of a woodland in which death, terror and torture had lurked ever since the 28th Division went into the fight were not to be forgotten for many days after the war had closed—and it seemed a long, long trail just then until the war would end, though there wasn't a doughboy but who was willing to declare that the Germans couldn't hold out long against such a scrap as the Americans were putting up, against such a forward rush as the French were making farther west or against such a splendid hammering as the British were accomplishing on the other end of the far-flung battle-line, in Flanders fields.

The full story of the 112th's part in the battle of the Argonne may never be known; maps and data gathered since the struggle can show the location, the positions of the troops and tell of the loss in men killed and wounded. But the complete story of individual bravery, of heroism in the face of hostile sweeping fire and the dogged determination-to-win that drove our boys forward when food was slow in coming and when they were ready to drop from exhaustion will perhaps never be related in its entirety.

The bravery of Sergeant Ralph I. Summerton, of Company I, in returning to the attack of Châtel Chéhery when he had been wounded and then learned that the company was without a commander, is illustrative of the heroism of the 112th men in action. He not only returned and led the company through the attack, but ascended

Hill 244 under heavy fire and was again wounded, his actions being an inspiration to everyone of his comrades. Summerton was taken to the rear badly battered up, but weeks afterward, while he lay in a hospital recuperating from his wounds, he received a letter signed in General Pershing's own hand, congratulating him on his courage, mentioning that he had won a commission to Second Lieutenant and that he had been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

More than sixty others of the regiment were recommended for the D. S. C. for bravery in the Argonne, and these recommendations were sent forward three times, and finally lost in the " red tape " procedure that surrounds much of army paper work—cases worthy of that honor which America has seen fit to bestow upon many others. But no matter; the memory of their sacrifice and the story of their bravery under fire are those anecdotes which will find a hearing year after year when the nightmare of the Argonne is fading.

No man in the 28th Division is apt to forget the import surrounding General Orders 10 of the 28th Division, dated October 21, 1918, designating the 28th as one of the fighting " red " divisions. It read:

The Division Commander desires to express his appreciation to all officers and soldiers of the 28th Division and of attached units, who, at all times during the advance in the Valley of the Aire and in the Argonne Forest, in spite of many hardships and constant personal danger, gave their best efforts to further the success of the Division.

As a result of this operation, which extended from 5.30 on the

morning of September 26th until the night of 8th–9th October, with almost continuous fighting, the enemy's line was forced back more than ten kilometers. In spite of most stubborn and at times desperate resistance, the enemy was driven out of Grand Boureuilles, Petite Boureuilles, Varennes, Montblainville, Aprémont, Pleinchamp Farm, La Forge and Châtel Chéhery, and the strongholds on Hills 223, 244 and Le Chène Tondu were captured in the face of strong machine gun and artillery fire.

The order continued, quoting the letter of Major General Liggett, of the First Army Corps, dated October 8th:

I desire to express to the 28th Division and its Commander my appreciation of the splendid work done by the Division on October 7, 1918.

The capture of Hill 244 and the combined advance of the right and left brigades bringing about the fall of the very strong positions of the enemy on the Chène Tondu and the Taille l'Abbé demonstrate excellent leadership and first-class fighting ability.

The advance in exploitation in front of your right brigade resulting from the foregoing actions was a very bold procedure which will undoubtedly lead to even greater results.

The General Order concluded with this statement:

As a "new" division on the Vesle the 28th was cited in orders from General Headquarters for its excellent service, and the splendid work just completed assures it a place in the very front ranks of the fighting "Red" Divisions. With such a position to maintain it is expected that every man will devote his best effort to the work at hand—to hasten that final victory which is now so near.

Nor is any 112th soldier apt to forget the wording of that letter of commendation addressed to the Commanding Officer of the 112th Infantry, from General Charles

Muir, preceding by a day the issuance of the "red Keystone" order. This letter is reproduced elsewhere in the volume.

General Pershing, in his blanket commendation of the divisions participating in the Meuse-Argonne offensive, has said:

> You will be long remembered for the stubborn persistence of your progress, your storming of obstinately defended machine gun nests, your penetration, yard by yard, of woods and ravines, your heroic resistance in the face of counter-attacks supported by powerful artillery fire. * * * Your achievement, which is scarcely to be equalled in American history, must remain a source of proud satisfaction to the troops who participated in the last campaign of the war. The American people will remember it as the realization of the hitherto potential strength of the American contribution toward the cause to which they had sworn allegiance. There can be no greater reward for a soldier or for a soldier's memory.

And to the 112th Infantry no higher tribute can be paid the brave men who died and were wounded in the forward rush in the Argonne than to their organization was assigned the post of honor in what is now generally conceded to have been the great American campaign of the World War. It was the 112th, as maps and statistics will show, that was assigned the hard task of helping clear a country which hardened French officers, old in the game, had declared impregnable. During every day that it was in the line it played the game with such fortitude that years cannot erase the scenes and heroic incidents which the mere mention of the Argonne Forest brings before the doughboy's mind.

CHAPTER XV

UNCROWNED HEROES OF THE ARGONNE DRIVE

The Hitherto Untold Story of the Runners—How a Color Sergeant Played the War Game Through Those Trying Days—Carrying "The Message to Garcia" on Meager Rations in an Untracked Wilderness.

For their splendid work in and about Châtel Chéhery on that memorable morning of October 7th, Captain John F. Graff, Jr., in command of the 1st Battalion, and Captain William G. Smith, in charge of the 3d, were recommended by the Brigade Commander for promotion to the rank of Major.

In his report of the action of Châtel Chéhery, Brigadier General Nolan, of the 55th Brigade, has this to say regarding the commander of the 112th's 1st Battalion:

Captain Graff, of the 112th Regiment, who was assigned to the command of the regiment after Colonel Shannon was mortally wounded, showed himself to be an officer of exceptional ability in the way he handled the regiment on October 7th and 8th in this battle, and earned promotion to the next higher grade.

General Nolan's report also includes this most interesting paragraph:

As a rule, battalions in the front line were served with hot food twice daily; when they were not, it was not due to lack of food supplies, but was due to the fact that the food details were cut off by the enemy's heavy shelling; that there was always ample ammunition for the rifles or machine guns, in spite of the fact that the expenditure of ammunition by the machine guns was very heavy; that

the artillery during the period covered by this report always responded with reasonable promptness to requests for artillery fire; that the wounded were cared for and evacuated promptly, motor ambulances coming into Apremont and later into Châtel Chéhery over the main road in spite of its being constantly heavily shelled; that though the signal lines were constantly cut by heavy shelling, the efficiency and devotion to duty of the signal men were such that repairs were always quickly made and communication promptly restored.

Consequently, it was no surprise that two members of the signal platoon should be especially mentioned in General Orders for valorous conduct in action. The first, under date of October 25th, read:

Second Lieutenant Godfrey D. Smith, commanding signal platoon, Hdqrs. Co., 112th Infantry, in the advance in the Argonne Forest, September 25th to October 9th, under most trying circumstances and severe shelling, established and maintained telephone communication between the advanced regimental P. C. and the rear area, without thought for his personal safety.

The second, citing an enlisted man, under date of December 29th, follows:

Private Carl H. Fraunfelter, Headquarters Company, 112th Infantry, in the advance in the Argonne Forest, September 29th, as a pigeon carrier, rendered himself conspicuous as a target for enemy fire owing to the pigeon basket he carried, but with unusual devotion to his duties and under most trying circumstances, remained constantly in touch with his Regimental Commander. By his conduct in that action he aroused the admiration of his associates and stimulated them to greater efforts.

And to that intrepid trench mortar platoon, which was everlastingly in the front, playing its full part, the

Division Commander, on October 25th, paid tribute in the following paragraphs of General Orders 21:

It gives me pleasure to record, in General Orders, a tribute to the valorous conduct on the part of the Stokes light trench mortar platoon, 112th Infantry, which distinguished itself by extraordinary gallantry in connection with military operations against an armed enemy of the United States under the following circumstances:

During the operations in the Argonne Forest, September 25th to October 9th, 1918, the Stokes light trench mortar platoon of the 112th Infantry carried their guns and ammunition throughout the advance, constantly keeping up with the assaulting battalions, this through vast stretches of barbed wire only partially cut and up hills which the infantry had to climb on hands and knees. They finished the advance and came out without losing any of their equipment. Their work was exhaustive, but the spirit of the men and the standard of their morale were exemplary.

Then, long after the Argonne battle had been fought and the great war brought to a close, a long-delayed citation appeared in Division General Orders of April 10, 1919, which read:

When Sergeant Peters, 112th Infantry, was wounded during the operations in the Argonne Forest, Color Sergeant Miles C. Shoup, Hq. Co., 112th Infantry, assumed charge of the runners and liaison men, and continued so until October 9th. During all of this time he not alone well directed the work of the runners, but many times under shellfire and the object of enemy snipers, and at great personal danger, he personally carried messages between Battalion, Regimental and Brigade Headquarters.

Shoup had been twice recommended for the D. S. C., but along with the other citations that had been forwarded, the 112th Infantry was "out of luck." Yet

Shoup's work was only one of the many instances of bravery under fire that went unnoticed by Headquarters far to the rear, but whose very act was an inspiration to the men in the line.

In fact, in the galaxy of brilliant achievements on the fighting front in France, none have been worthy of such honorable mention and yet, curiously enough, few have been so much forgotten in the official records as the rôle played by those soldiers who served as " runners."

Officers like to speak of the " runner " system as " liaison," borrowing the term from the French. Liaison is the maintenance of communication, and the use of runners between units is only one of the means of keeping in touch with other battalions or companies in the attack. There are company runners, who maintain communication between their units and battalion headquarters; and then there are battalion and regimental runners, each keeping in touch with the next higher unit, carrying messages that may hold the fate of the entire regiment in its few plainly written words.

It is the runner who goes through the hail of machine gun bullets, who must push his way through the darkness and the undergrowth; it is the runner, if he is an efficient one, who must carry " the message to Garcia,"—in other words, no matter how warm the battle, how heavy the fire, whether the ground is swampy, covered with underbrush or there is impassable undergrowth infested with Hun machine gunners, the runner *must* get through.

And the Argonne battle, in which the 112th Infantry

played such a brilliant part, demonstrated better than any other campaign that there were brave men in the outfit. Little fellows who, perhaps, could have been trimmed in a hand-to-hand fight with the Hun, carried messages over areas and through woods swept by intensive shellfire; fought their way through undergrowth and mud in the pitch-blackness of an Argonne night, carrying the word to attack at the designated hour. Mere persiflage cannot pay tribute to the brave boys and the brave hearts—these runners whose names are all but forgotten in the compilation of a record of what the regiment has done as a unit.

Every day that the Argonne battle continued, from the memorable jump-off on the morning of September 26th, to the time that the 112th was relieved on October 9th, produced not only one but a score of heroes. Now and then the story of some brave act filtered back to the P. C.'s in the rear, but the song of the uncrowned heroes of the Argonne—the message-carriers of the 112th—has remained unsung until now.

And in this almost-forgotten record of real heroism under fire there looms one name—that of Color Sergeant Shoup, of Oil City; it was Miles Shoup and his valiant crew of old " standby runners " that succeeded in keeping in touch with every unit of the regiment while Hun machine gunners tried vigorously, yet in vain, to break through and separate one battalion from another, and company from company.

Day after day it was a dogged, persistent pushing

forward; one attack after another up the slopes of Chène Tondu, until it was finally dominated. For five consecutive days, in every charge, the runners and the regimental intelligence section, instead of taking their accustomed place in the charge, went over the top with Lieut.-Colonel John P. Bubb, then in command of the regiment —not behind the attacking battalions, but in the very forefront.

During the second night of the Argonne battle, Chauchat and rifle ammunition became exhausted; it was Bobby Owens, of Harrisburg, who hustled back to the supply train, finding it by luck, and then, with the assistance of other runners, rushing it to the front. Owens guided Sergeant Harry Strayer's platoon, consisting at that time of only eight men, through three kilometers of woodland to Petite Boureuilles, and returned safely in time to take up the hike to the valley south of Montblainville. This was at the time that the regiment was moving into the Depot Ravine—an occasion when the Germans' sweeping fire was getting in its first deadly work.

Night after night, and during the hours of daylight, the runners played their rôle to perfection; hiking through the mud and the rain, sleeping against trees from whose branches the rain dripped, covering the country at all hours, there was no sleep or real rest for the men who wore the red band on the arm. Boys they might have been when the attack started; under fire they were the most courageous of men.

"But that doesn't mean that we weren't scared,"

Charles Wolfe, of York, declared. "I can remember how I felt when Colonel Bubb called me one morning. 'Wolfe,' he said, 'find the 2d Battalion; I don't know where it is, but I think it is here'—and he pointed to a map. 'It's the only map I have, and don't you lose it.' So another runner and I started on the hunt for the 2d. We were down in the ravine south of Chène Tondu then; we pushed westward and ran into the 77th Division, then we passed them and the first we knew—whee-e-e-e, bang; whee-e-e-e, bang! The Huns were sniping at us. We lay down and crawled along; my heart was jumping, pounding and throbbing as never before. Then we stumbled on to a couple of dead Germans. Somehow, I don't know how we did it, we kept on crawling, and reaching a slope again, ran at top speed, bullets whistling after us all the way. Here we had been out in front of the Germans' line, and the 77th, as we found out, was making ready to attack. We had been gone for several hours, and we never did find the 2d Battalion that day; but luck was with us, and they were with the outfit in the charges the next morning."

By the fifth day of the battle, which was the 30th, the German machine gunners and shrapnel were taking their toll. Sergeant Martin L. Peters, of York, who until that time had charge of the runners, under Color Sergeant Shoup's general direction, was wounded. A machine gun bullet blew off the thumb of his right hand, and he fell hit in the thigh as well. Stewart Brown, Harvey M. Kennedy and Howard T. Kelly, all three of whom had

done good work under heavy fire as efficient runners, were wounded, when German snipers' bullets caught them in a trench as one of the charges on Chène Tondu was in progress. Gradually, as the fighting days wore on, the personnel of the runners changed.

With Peters out of the running, and Stewart Brown shot twice in the foot and thigh while following Colonel Bubb, other men took their places. The fighting became more strenuous day to day; as October arrived it had developed into Indian scrapping and ferreting out of bothersome machine gun nests, and this was always at a cost. It was during this time that Sergeant Shoup proved his mettle.

On October 4th John Mumma, of Harrisburg, made his way back to the kitchens and guided the ration wagons of the whole regiment to a location near the front. This was the first successful attempt to get food to the men; all other attempts had fallen short. When rations did arrive, the regiment had forged ahead, and, as on previous occasions, the men were as good as lost from the wagons which carried the subsistence. Mumma's trip was made under heavy shellfire.

Then when the kitchens were in position north of Montblainville, one night the Germans put over a heavy barrage that swept through the area and left destruction in its trail; cooks and kitchen police, supposed to have the "safe" jobs of the Army, were caught, and a number were sent to hospitals in the rear, badly maimed. Others were killed outright. Supply Sergeant George H. Al-

bright, of Harrisburg, who was with the Headquarters Company, declared that the scene enacted at the kitchens when the German shells dropped was a horrible one; there was hardly enough left of some men to bury, and in the gathering darkness the cries of the wounded added ghastliness and horror to it all.

Rations figured in the war game a few days later, on October 7th, when Châtel Chéhery was taken in the brave charge by the 1st and 3d Battalions, led by the runners and Regimental Headquarters staff. After the taking of the town and Hill 244, mess wagons were stopped as they tried to get to the men with food; the Huns put over a heavy barrage, and so the mess was dropped along the road about a thousand yards south of the town. Runners and members of the intelligence section, of which Sergeants John A. Lindner and Philip T. Meredith had charge, took advantage of this rare treat; but for a time a lone German sniper made the situation dangerous.

One man was shot in the thigh, but instead of dispersing and running to cover, the fighting doughboys merely crawled down behind the row of marmite cans and appeared two minutes later when two riflemen picked off the Hun. Then no more bullets interrupted the proceedings, though scores of Hun shells kept wheezing and whistling overhead, trying to get the range of the road and inflict casualties. In this, they were partially successful.

Significant, too, is the fact that the runners and intelligence men were in the lead as Captain Graff's bat-

talion swung into Châtel Chéhery, clearing the way of Huns, while Captain Smith's fighting 3d Battalion dominated Hill 244.

Fellows like Walter C. Plasterer, of Shippensburg; Charles Perry, of Oil City; Arthur Speese, of Harrisburg; Joseph Wherrity, of Mahanoy City; Andrew Passenger, of Warren; Charles E. Wolfe, of York; Thomas Price, of Altoona; Robert Owens, of Harrisburg; Ralph Laisure, of Monroe, Ind., were a few of those who were right on the job all through the Argonne push. But this list is only partial, for on many other occasions during the Argonne push boys of the type of Stanley Rockley, of Pittsburgh; Rowe B. Myers, of Kirklin, Ind.; Reese Halsey, of Philadelphia; Howard Stewart, of Oil City; Sidney Zullinger, of Shippensburg; Ray Neideffer, of Tunnelton, Ill.; Joseph McGuckin and David Baumgardner, both of Pittsburgh; George Silar, of York; Eugene Young, of Vincennes, Ind.; George Wallace, of Evansville, Ind.; and many others whose names, but not whose deeds, have been forgotten, helped achieve for the "runners" an enviable reputation as doughboys who knew no fear.

Histories and the newspapers may in days to come give a great deal of credit to the officers and men of the regiment for their share in the Argonne push; too much cannot be said of the riflemen and their accurate aim, and this in spite of the fact that many replacements who took part in the drive had been overseas less than three weeks and in the service less than two months; but when the

final history is written, here's hoping they won't forget the little fellows who dodged through shellfire and machine gun hail, through undergrowth and the impenetrable blackness of the forest night—those fellows with the red bands on their arms.

All honor to those boys who carried " the message to Garcia." By their acts and untiring attention to duty they kept the attacking units together, maintained communication when it seemed that it was not a battle of forces systematically subduing the Hun, but rather a hundred battling groups of riflemen, each group routing out one machine gun nest and pushing forward to another.

They endured all the hardships, they fought the same battle, they made the same record and helped to a great extent to write the achievements of the 112th Infantry in the Argonne into one of the brightest chapters of the American Army's activity in the war zone of France.

Uncrowned heroes of the Argonne though you may be now—your reward will grow as the years pass by and the whole story is unfolded.

CHAPTER XVI

PUTTING LIFE INTO A QUIET SECTOR

Brief Respite in the Commercy District—Rumors of the Coming German Crash—Patrol Engagements on the Thiaucourt Front, Capture of Many Huns and the Winning of More Commendations—War's Most Eventful Day, Its Last.

With the 28th Division's chapter in the Argonne drive having been brought to a close on October 9th, when the 82d Division took over the sector in the front line, those tired doughboys who had marched southward from the line on that day of relief slept as they seldom had before upon reaching Montblainville. For they knew that on the following morning they would be on the march to "somewhere else in France."

In a hot blistering sun, the 10th found the entire outfit on the march from Montblainville to Neuvilly, then turning eastward to the railhead at Aubreville and climbing the hill at Parois, there to embus between 4 and 6 o'clock that afternoon for another destination.

As part of the column rested for two hours and had breakfast at Neuvilly during the forenoon, men of the rear echelon staff and the band witnessed the grewsome sight of an American artilleryman ground to death beneath his own caisson on the bridge spanning the Aire. This was the grim tragedy of war; playing the game and

braving all the dangers of the line, only to be killed when the relief had come.

A whirlwind trip overnight, totaling 100 miles, in French trucks, took the regiment from Parois to the Commercy district, north of Toul. The trucks which carried the Headquarters Company dumped off the passengers, tired, sleepy, stiff and cold, at 6 o'clock on the morning of the 11th at Cornieville.

Iron rations were gone, and the outlook for something to eat was poor. For six hours men huddled around bonfires hastily made; the ground was damp and the air was cool; and then word came for a hike of 14 kilos into Vignot, just a mile outside of the big city of Commercy. The word " big " can be used, because it was the largest town we had been billeted near during all our travels in France. " Beaucoup " small stores did a thriving business in Vignot that night—grapes, cheese, nuts and canned goods went at high prices; for, as on every other move, the wagon train was just getting under way, and we had to look out for our own rations.

Fellows who had money in their pockets went to homes in the village, and ordered French-fried potatoes, steak and eggs where they could be obtained; but the ones who got such treats were lucky during the first few days, because the demand was great. Others lived on condensed milk, hardtack and whatever they could buy at the stores, and the assortment was meager.

The location of the units of the regiment at that time was: Companies A and B, Brossey en Woevre; Com-

panies C and D, at Raulecourt; Company E, at Fremereville; Company F, at Gironville; the other soldiers of the regiment were billeted in Vignot, where Regimental Headquarters was located.

Incidentally, there were many beds available in the town, at a franc to two francs a night—and so Bobby Owens and I slept in a real bed that night and several to follow, for the first time since we arrived in France.

It was during this period that the regiment was in the predicament of having two Colonels on the job in the same town. Colonel Rickards had left the hospital the night the outfit moved to the Commercy region, traveling 125 miles via Bar-le-Duc to get to Vignot. Colonel Blanton Winship, who had been placed in charge of the regiment shortly before the relief from the Argonne, directed affairs, and continued to have charge until Sunday, October 12th; at that time he was relieved and assigned to the command of the 110th Infantry in the 55th Brigade, and Colonel Rickards was given a hearty welcome to his old post as director of destinies of the old 112th.

The 13th was a great old day. The band gave a concert for the first in a long time; then the papers arrived shortly afterward, stating that Germany had accepted Wilson's peace terms, and was willing to evacuate captured territory. Fellows, jubilant over the situation, ran down the street slapping one another on the back, and crying out, " The war's over! "

The feeling that the war was almost ended went far to put the doughboys in great spirits after such a strenu-

ous campaign as the Argonne, but Colonel Rickards, fearing that the morale of the regiment was to suffer if this premature enthusiasm was to become too widespread, the following day issued an order in which he said:

> The news of the past few days, while most gratifying, does not terminate the war, and we must not permit it to turn our attention from further perfecting our organization for the tasks set for the A. E. F.—to bring the Hun and his colleagues to an unconditional surrender, which cannot be accomplished until the Commanding Officer of all the Central Powers at war has by a recognized act of surrender laid down his arms and authority to the Commanding Officer of all the Allied Powers. While it is believed that present steps will lead to such a conclusion, we must not relax our efforts and our lasting vigilance.
>
> United States troops have played a most important part in this war, and no unit has done more creditable work than the 28th (Keystone) Division. The 112th Infantry has carried its part at all times with credit, and the 28th Division must be a source of pride to the people of the old Keystone Commonwealth. It has been under shellfire constantly from the 4th day of July to the 10th day of October—a record, we believe, unsurpassed by any other division.

With the large number of replacements that had come to the regiment during those first few days in Vignot and the area adjoining, all companies were mustered on Monday, the 14th, and everything put in readiness for training on the morrow. It was rumored the 112th would be in the area for several weeks; but another twenty-four hours changed the whole complexion of the situation. The next afternoon orders came to be prepared to move at short notice; then, in a drizzling rain and on one of the darkest nights we had had, the entire

outfit pulled out for the Thiaucourt-Pannes sector at 6 o'clock, marching part way and traveling the remainder of the distance by trucks. The cookers had arrived in time to give the men the first warm meal they had had since the relief on October 9th, and now the men were off for up the line once more.

Then, as the 1st Battalion took up the position in the new sector, it was found that a relief of the 147th Infantry, or Ohio National Guard troops, was being effected. This was completed at 1.20 the afternoon of the 16th. The new positions held by the regimental units in the new sector, or in the Woevre region, as the communiqués called it, included: Regimental Headquarters, shack in woods of Beney; Machine Gun Company, at St. Benoit; Headquarters Company and Supply Company, at Pannes; 1st Battalion, in the right subsector, Bois de Dampvitoux and Xammes; Companies E and F, holding the front line in the Dampvitoux woods, and Companies G and H forming the Brigade reserve; with the 3d Battalion in the left subsector (Companies I and K in the front line, L and M in support).

Thus was the scene set for days of vigorous patrolling, capture of German prisoners, reconnaissances on a new scale; features that were to keep our boys on the jump day and night. At times there were as many as five patrol parties a day, varying in size from 6 to 250 men or more.

On Friday, October 18th, the 2d Battalion sent out the first patrol, exploring Marimbois Farm; it succeeded

in getting close enough to the German trenches to hear the occupants talking. Then one-pounders were brought up and put in place to rout the enemy out of position. Company K maneuvered about, taking up a position to the left of this battalion along the road leading to Haumont (then German-held), and moved back at daybreak. Of course, most of the patrol work and dashes into the enemy's line for prisoners, information and other details desired by Division and Corps Headquarters took place at night, or during the early morning.

There was little artillery activity on the 19th, but for every shell the Germans sent over the Americans sent back about half a dozen. It was then clearly established and self-evident to us that we were occupying what was formerly German-held territory—along the line established by the break-off in the St. Mihiel salient September 14th—for the water tank near the broad-gauge railroad passing Regimental Headquarters, the buildings and other places about the woods all bore German marks and signs.

German helmets, discarded equipment and paraphernalia of all kinds were strewn about the woods. The men lived in dugouts or in old German bunkhouses; conditions were crowded and not of the best. As for myself, I slept in what had been a chicken coop, perforated with a hundred machine-gun holes and as leaky as a sieve in the lightest rain. The boys who were billeted in the town of Pannes and elsewhere were having things all their own

way; good places to sleep, three squares a day, while we got along with two meals that were hours apart.

The 21st and 22d saw patrolling operations going on successfully and on a large scale. On Monday a German patrol operating in front of the 3d Battalion line was surprised. Of four men, two were killed, one captured and one escaped. These men, brought to Headquarters for examination, said they belonged to the 224th Division. Then, on Tuesday, which was the 22d, a successful raid was carried out by the 2d Battalion, Companies E and F, between 1.30 and 2.30 in the morning. Twenty-seven Germans were caught in the net that had been spread for them; we didn't lose a man. Our only losses during those two days were one man killed and another wounded by aero bombs from Hun machines and a third man wounded by enemy shellfire.

The official record for those days, while seeming to indicate little beyond the usual routine, formed an interesting chapter. It ran something like this:

October 22d—From 1.30 to 2.30 A.M. 2d Battalion sent out raiding parties. Lieutenant Riggs and 44 men raided Bois Dommartin and found no Huns. Party 2, Lieutenant Shatzer commanding, raided aviation park and got 27 prisoners.

October 23d—Intermittent artillerying. Two Germans of 27th Pioneer Battalion, 224th Division, voluntarily surrendered themselves at 9 P.M. to an outpost of Company F; interviewed at Headquarters, soldiers said they belonged to 224th Division.

October 24th—Two officers and 25 men from 3d Battalion proceeded to Haumont to establish a strongpoint. Detachment entered the town and occupied it without opposition—capturing a German

town without meeting a German. The town and all buildings were thoroughly searched and no Huns were found.

October 25th—Three patrols from 3d Battalion proceeded to Bois Bonseil at 11 P.M. for purpose of ascertaining if woods were held in force. Wire encountered, and belief expressed woods are strongly held.

October 26th—Intermittent shellfire near Regimental P. C. Day quiet.

October 27th—Three Germans taken in raid made by 2d Battalion party consisting of Second Lieutenant William Siegrist, Jr., and Second Lieutenant Humbert L. Aull, 12 non-coms and 65 men. Bois Dommartin raided. Enemy planes continued active during afternoon. Raid took place at 6 P.M.

So the chapter of the doings in No Man's Land and in the barbed wire entanglements of the woods ran, from day to day. But the Germans put one over on the 112th boys early on the evening of October 29th. That morning the Huns had surprised the Machine Gun Company men then forming the outpost in Haumont; one boy was killed, several wounded and three captured. At 6.30 that night the Germans put over a heavy barrage and Haumont was abandoned.

With one or two exceptions, there were few large encounters in the area held by the 112th on the Thiaucourt front, in the immediate vicinity north of Pannes. There was the customary bombing by Hun planes—and, luckily, most of their missiles dropped in "dead" territory. This made impossible any lights at night; and even the fires had to be put out early for fear that sparks from the stovepipe might disclose the location of billets or the regimental and battalion P. C.'s. Dugouts there

were a-plenty, but those were damp and when the men got a chance to sleep in barracks, even though conditions were crowded and cooties were on a rampage, they chose the latter course.

Fellows who had never suffered from cooties before began " reading their shirt " when time permitted; flies were the bothersome pests at Fismes and Fismette, here it was the mud and the cooties.

How welcome the sunlight looked to us those days! Very little of it penetrated through the trees and dense growth, even when a warm day did arrive, and so the ground was damp most of the time. At nights there was the customary fog and moisture. There was little amusement for the men; and when the Y. M. C. A., the Salvation Army, the Red Cross or the K. of C. sent up chocolate, cakes, tobacco and papers for the boys, there was a regular inning of joy. American-printed Paris papers —the *New York Herald* and the *Daily Mail*—arrived a day late; and there was always an anxious crowd on hand to get the first batch and rush it out to the boys in the line or in the dugouts.

Then, after things settled down into more or less of a routine, the War Work agencies saw to it that we were kept stocked in Quaker Oats, chocolate and whatever else was on hand and for sale at that particular time.

The men entered into the patrol work with spirit, and, instead of spending the days in listless inactivity, put life into a " dead " area and kept things warm for the Germans. In other words, they were playing the game in

old-time fashion, as American doughboys had done ever since they landed in France; a vigorous offensive was always under way, and while at this time it was confined merely to patrol engagements and " feeling out " parties, it none the less reflected credit on the officers and men of the entire regiment.

On the night of October 28th two raiding parties made a successful reconnaissance of the Bois de Dommartin, but our barrage fell short and this precluded a thorough search of the woods. A party of Germans were encountered, however, and gave themselves up without resistance.

Among them was one who said his name was Emil Born, and his birthplace Mannheim, Germany. For eleven years he conducted a glove factory in Paris, France; when the war broke out he was with his wife in the Black Forest, she being in poor health. And so, in the course of events, Born, who is a nephew of the millionaire M. Born, of M. Born and Company, Chicago clothiers, was taken into the German army in November, 1914, fought in eleven different regiments on several different fronts, but mostly in Russia. A few weeks before he had been sent to this sector, and then:

Well, the night came when at 6.23 our boys went over the top and into the German line. They rushed the position where Born and his machine crew had been. The crew deserted Born, leaving him and a young fellow of strapping size behind.

" I told them to stay with me," he said in surprisingly

good English, explaining that he had spent eight months in England and during that time had acquired some knowledge of the English language. "But the shells—well, they came so fast that they bowled us over; my men got scared and ran."

For fully two hours he kept the little office force in paroxysms of laughter at his description of how things were going behind the German lines; how he had protested against fighting France because his wife had been a French woman, and how, when these protests proved futile, he determined to come over and give himself up to the enemy at the first opportunity.

"To-night the chance came. I was prepared," and he exhibited an American razor he had carried for eleven years, a bundle of sugar, soap and towel and toilet accessories. He was prepared—of that there was no doubt; then he threw out a bunch of German coins, and officers and men shared in them for gratification of their own curiosity. He told how the German soldiers had long since recognized that the country was on its last legs so far as the war was concerned; that many Germans wanted to give themselves up but lacked only the opportunity—and now his opportunity had come to get away—and so he went. It was either a matter of fighting to his death or giving himself up, and under the circumstances he gave himself up—and he added that he hadn't any desire to fight the energetic Americans anyhow.

An hour and a half passed, and then of all surprises—

in came three of the Unteroffizier's crew, three of the eight men that had fled when the American shells came over; and they were about the most delighted men you ever saw! They hugged each other and greeted each other in German—and then the word resounded:

"Guards, get these men into line!"

So the eleven Huns passed out, smoking American cigarettes and carrying American issued cookies in their pockets.

We fellows felt then that the war was surely nearing an end when such things could take place on such a sector as the one we were on; when men who face each other in death grips can forget hostilities and treat the "other fellow," captured and helpless, as man to man.

At that time aeroplanes of both the Germans and Americans were kept busy conducting a propaganda campaign. One day a German plane dropped a message, bundles of them in fact, printed in English and French, explaining that "GERMANY WANTS PEACE," and setting forth the "reasons" why the Americans should quit fighting. Another propaganda circular read: "QUIT FIGHTING—Come over to Germany and be a free boarder until the end of the war." But the best one of all was the one that the Americans sent across; it told the Huns the real reason that the war was continuing —that as long as the Kaiser was in power the war would go on, that as soon as he was fired and Germany was willing to talk the Allies' language, the war would end.

On November 1st the situation seemed so encouraging for an early end of the war that I wrote home:

> The war must be very nearly ended now, for word comes to-night through official channels that Turkey has virtually given in—and so a dream of early return to the good old U. S. A., of parades back home; and of return to civilian life looms up to-night as a greater possibility than ever. I am hopeful that this may all come true—and for some reason or other I believe that not later than next April 23d we will be boarding ship for the land we love and for which we are still fighting.

This prediction of April 23d, merely a random guess, was not so far wrong after all, for on that date in 1919 —though we did not know it during those days in Beney Woods—we were to be westward bound on the Atlantic Ocean.

Full appreciation of the work that the 112th Infantry and the other units of the 28th Division were doing in the front line in the Woevre region and across No Man's Land was not slow in coming from sources " higher up " in army circles when one batch of Germans after another was forwarded to Division Headquarters from the little regimental P. C. in the Bois de Beney.

A memorandum from Division Headquarters on November 6th served to bring the fact into the limelight that the work which Colonel Rickards' boys was doing in " getting the Hun " and tracking him to his lair was not only responsible for mention of the Woevre region in the daily communiqués, when the spectacular advance toward Sedan by the Americans threatened to dim every

other part in the war game into insignificance, but was also appreciated to its full extent. Here are the telegrams, given verbatim, as they were quoted in the memorandum of that date:

HEADQUARTERS SECOND ARMY,
NOVEMBER 1, 1918.

Commanding General, 28th Division:

Congratulations to your division on the way in which they are bagging the Boche. It is fine.

BULLARD.

HEADQUARTERS SECOND ARMY,
NOVEMBER 2, 1918.

Commanding General, 28th Division:

Another big bag of Boche. I again congratulate the 28th Division. You surely know how to do it.

BULLARD.

FOURTH ARMY CORPS,
NOVEMBER 2, 1918.

Commanding General, 28th Division:

Accept for yourself and convey to the officers and men of your division who participated in this morning's raid of the Bois Bonseil my appreciation of the excellent results obtained. The raid was most efficiently planned and managed and executed with the spirit that wins.

MUIR.

Major General Charles Muir, promoted from the command of the 28th Division to command of the Fourth Army Corps, might just as well have designated in his telegram the 112th Infantry for the work in the Bois Bonseil—for it was this unit that did all the work. The

raid took place at 4.40 on the morning of the 2d. Three German officers and 42 men were captured, as well as one light Maxim machine gun. The patrol from our lines consisted of three officers and 148 men, all from the 3d Battalion. As the rush was made, the doughboys met with slight rifle and machine gun fire, but managed to reach the German trenches just the same. In doing so, we lost three men killed and 21 wounded.

Then patrol work grew in earnest. November 3d came and went, without event, but there were many incidents crowded into the history of the 4th. Company I advanced as a patrol, under a barrage that started at 5.10 in the morning. German machine guns couldn't halt our boys, and on they rushed, right through the barbed wire and underbrush. The losses were three killed and 30 wounded, but we took nine prisoners.

A combat patrol from Company B, led by Lieutenant Everett, went over to clean out the Marimbois Farm. One German was killed and 13 captured; while we lost no men at all. Two dugouts and a pillbox were blown up that night at 9 o'clock by another patrol in charge of Lieutenant Everett. Twelve Huns were found in one dugout and surrendered. Our casualties were one killed and one wounded.

The customary reconnaissance was conducted the following day, but without event. Shortly before noon a German plane started over our lines and was within our area when anti-aircraft guns began popping. The ma-

chine sped on, but the observer was shot from his seat and fell, a crumpled mass, in the 2d Battalion area.

And then, while the patrol activities continued from day to day and our men pushed farther into the woods in the district to the east of La Chaussée and in the general direction of Chambley, this gratifying communication, addressed to the Commanding General of the division, came from Headquarters of the Second Army:

NOVEMBER 5, 1918.

I desire to inform you of my gratification at the vigorous and successful activities of your division since its entry into line on the front of the Second Army. The recent patrols and raids have resulted in making No Man's Land our land, as well as in inflicting losses on them, and capturing a considerable number of prisoners. Such conduct exemplifies the American spirit and cannot fail to create a feeling of confidence on the part of our own troops and of corresponding depression on the part of the enemy. The 28th Division has shown its ability to execute promptly the tasks which have been given to it to perform, and its officers and men have exhibited an efficiency and dash which are highly commendable.

R. L. BULLARD,
Lieutenant-General, U. S. A.

Such words of appreciation could not help but bring cheer to the routine days of the Woevre and patrol parties which were becoming hard worked. Then, as the 8th and 9th slipped by, interest grew in the situation between the Allies and Germany. But, meanwhile, no chances were being taken. Machinery was set on foot and secret field orders were printed for what was believed to be the entering wedge in a drive toward Metz.

This was the battle that almost was—but never came.

Field Order No. 58, Headquarters 28th Division, dated at 20 minutes after 12 on the morning of the 11th of November, declared that "the enemy has stubbornly resisted our attack. The Fourth Corps will break through the line La Chaussée-Charey Rémercourt-Prény and continue its advance 11th November at 5.45 o'clock."

This last order of the World War—as circumstances a short time afterward proved it to be—is reproduced in its entirety, constituting as it does a battle order that would have opened the gateway and prepared the path for the 28th Division's participation in General Foch's great drive against Metz, planned for November 14th—an admission that was to come weeks later. Here is the order, as it reached the 112th Infantry Headquarters early on that memorable day, November 11th:

SECRET
HEADQUARTERS 28TH DIVISION,
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES
FRANCE.

FIELD ORDERS 11TH NOVEMBER, 1918.

No. 58. MAPS: Same as Field Order No. 55. 0.20 hour.

1. The enemy has stubbornly resisted our attack. The 2d Army continues its attack. The 4th Corps will break through the line LA CHAUSSÉE-CHAREY-RÉMERCOURT-PRÉNY and continue its advance, 11th November, at 5.45 o'clock.

2. The 28th Division will take and hold the enemy trenches, including the BOIS BONSEIL, between the boundaries: line 360.02-249.2, 360.7–250.0, and line 360.7–248.0, 361.7–249.0.

3. (a) The 55th Brigade, less one battalion, will execute the attack.

(b) The 3d Battalion, 110th Infantry, will remain in position and provide combat liaison with the 33d Division.

The 56th Brigade, less two battalions, will be in reserve in the vicinity of ST. BENOIT prepared to move upon call. The 3d Battalion of the 112th Infantry will maintain its position now in the sector. The battalion in BOIS DE DOMMARTIN will hold its position.

The Commanding General, 55th Brigade, will be prepared, after seizing the enemy's main line of position, to then move to the right and left and capture the enemy's main line trenches to include LA CHAUSSÉE and DAMPVITOUX and after this to move on HAGEVILLE, where he will seize and hold a defensive position and await orders.

(c) ARTILLERY:

The artillery will execute destructive fire on the enemy's main line positions until H hour. At H hour a standing barrage will be placed upon the front-line trench in the sector of attack. The program as executed from that point on in the attack of the 55th Brigade on 10th November in that sector will then be carried out.

The Artillery Brigade Commander will be prepared to concentrate heavy destructive fire on the town of LA CHAUSSÉE and the towns of DAMPVITOUX and DOMMARTIN. This fire to be maintained until a designated H hour, to then raise in order that the infantry may attack. The attack on LA CHAUSSÉE by the infantry will be from the east. The attack on DAMPVITOUX will be from the northwest. In addition he will be prepared to cover an infantry advance on HAGEVILLE.

(X) Periodic situation reports will be rendered to the Chief of Staff every hour by Brigade Commanders.

4. Administrative Orders: No change.

5. Plan of Liaison: No change.

P. C.'s: No change.

By command of Major General Muir:

OFFICIAL. W. C. SWEENEY,

E. P. DENSON, *Chief of Staff.*

A. C. of S. G-3.

The order had hardly arrived and the first copies made ready for distribution to the battalions, when a flash came over the telephone to hold up the attack until further orders. Then anxious minutes and finally hours slipped by, and officers stood waiting for the word to rush the attack. At twenty-five minutes past 8 o'clock came the welcome word over the field telephone that the armistice had been signed and that all hostilities were to cease at 11 A.M. that day.

Runners who were waiting to speed the message to take up the attack carried this memorandum, far more welcome than the other, to battalion P. C.'s. Officers and enlisted men could hardly confine their enthusiasm. The memo read:

HEADQUARTERS 112TH INFANTRY,
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES
FRANCE.

NOVEMBER 11, 1918.

MEMORANDUM No. 1. 8.30 hr.

The following message receive at 8.25 hr., 11 November, 1918, is published for the information and guidance of all concerned and will be strictly observed and adhered to:

"In compliance with orders from higher command announcing that the armistice was signed effective 11.00 hr., November 11th, at or before that time all hostilities and advances must cease. The Division Commander directs that there be no further attacks made, but that small formations be pushed forward and dig in in front of front-line units for defense. There must be no advance after 11 o'clock, at which time all Battalion Commanders in the forward line

will submit accurate sketch showing the position of their most advance elements. No communication will be held with the enemy in any manner or form whatsoever."

By order of

COL. GEO. C. RICKARDS.

OFFICIAL
JAMES C. SHAW,
Captain, 112th Infantry,
Adjutant.

And then, as in many another attack, but surpassing in severity and point of concentration any fire heretofore witnessed, all hell let loose. American gunners threw into their 75s and 155s and whatever caliber guns were in that district, every available shell; speed records in sending them into German territory were broken, and Jerry, too, was not slow in answering—with the result that for more than two hours every acre of ground within that forest area literally became the most unsafe place on earth.

Yet the God of Battles was with our outfit that day; not only had the armistice come, but not a man was wounded or killed in the merciless fire that poured into our territory; what casualties our gunners inflicted in " Germany " may never be known.

Those boys of the regiment who were in the trenches that day, on duty as runners in the Beney woods or at work in the battalion and regimental P. C.'s can all vouch for the severity of that shellfire.

They can tell you of how, during the last few hours of battle, hundreds upon hundreds of American shells

were sent flying into Germany, while the Huns did their worst to make things miserable for the Americans in like manner; but the Germans did not succeed. The shells dropped everywhere—passed each other en route, American and German made, and the fellows who were through the hell of Fismes, the treacherous passage in the Argonne, and in the hard patrol work in this particular sector, declared those last moments of the war game had nothing on the other days, so far as comfort was concerned.

" There was more hell in five minutes from real concentrated shellfire than we had ever seen," remarked one doughboy who had been through the worst of the game in France.

Lester Swartz, of Newburg, wrote this about the eventful hours of that morning:

This is a day that will never be forgotten (November 11). For the last few days we have been very active, sending out patrols, etc., and the artillery has been continually shelling. This morning at about 2 o'clock we received orders to make an attack some time during the morning.

Last evening we received word that the armistice had been signed, but that was all we were able to find out. This morning, for some reason, the attack was held up, but the troops were held in readiness to go over at any moment. At 8.25 A.M. the Colonel called me to his quarters, and when I entered he was talking on the telephone. He told me to take down what they said to him, and it was the message calling for hostilities to cease at 11 A.M. I surely published that message in record time.

All the forenoon the artillery kept up a devilish fire and, of course, we cursed them all. It was tough luck that some fellows had

to be picked off at the last minute. Just before 11 A.M. I went to the Colonel's quarters for his approval on a memorandum I was to publish. Shortly before 11 (at exactly 10.59.20) the artillery cut loose with the highest speed they could fire. The din was terrific. We were watching on the Colonel's watch, and at 3 seconds before 11 o'clock the last shot was fired. As the roar died away in the woods the Colonel looked up and said, " Thank God, that finishes it! "

A few days later Colonel Rickards said:

I think that the most terrible gunfire that I have witnessed was the last three hours of the war. I estimate that in the area occupied by the 112th Infantry about 3000 shells fell, and most remarkable to state, not a casualty from one of them. This seems almost impossible, yet it is a fact. The last gun that I heard fired from our side was at just three seconds to 11 o'clock. The last shell that I heard coming from the enemy was a 6-inch one that fell within 75 yards of my P. C., but, fortunately, it was a dud. This was at 11 o'clock.

There you have the complete story. The moment the guns quit firing, however, and the earth no longer rocked under the terrific vibration, Heinies and Yanks alike were out of the trenches, through the wire, and shaking hands. Then for a whole hour the souvenir business did a remarkable exchange. Chocolates, cigarettes and tobacco went for German belt buckles, coins, buttons, shoulder-straps, anything else the Heinie was glad to part with. No soldiers were more delighted than the Huns themselves that the conflict was over.

That night signal flares and torches were sent into the azure blue from all corners of No Man's Land and from the trenches; lights cut their way through the woods from uncovered windows that marked the P. C. The

night was "quiet" for once in the war zone—the peace that will become permanent had come at last.

A few days later one of the 112th doughboys, describing the last moments on the line, wrote home, adding these paragraphs:

There is no denying the fact that it is a great feeling to know that bombing planes are not after your goat or shells aren't dogging you on the way to mess, scattering shrapnel this way and that. The nights are perfect—clear, blue sky, with a fine moon, and all the old stars—we take a deeper interest in the beauties of nature now when we feel that there isn't much chance of gazing that way, with toes turned up, all the time. The hellish days of shellfire, weird, miserable, terrorizing nights are over; we sleep the sleep of other days—and hopes grow bigger and bigger every day. We long for the time to get back to the good old U. S. A., and are hoping that the departure for a seaport will not be many months distant.

If we were to believe every rumor that comes our way, rumors more plentiful than even the Mexican border ever saw, we would be on shipboard before December was far advanced and would be in the national capital not long after. But we'll get there some time, don't worry!

On the afternoon of November 11th Colonel Rickards addressed a memorandum to all the officers and men of the command, calling upon them for their support in the days that were to follow the armistice, days in which there was work of another character to be done. He said:

The Great World War is slowly but surely drawing to an end. This regiment has taken a part second to none, has met all its duties and in every way proven its worthiness; gaining and holding the confidence of all who came in contact with it. While it has done all this, its duties are not yet completed. Even after peace negotiations

have been signed between the two great war powers and the world again settles into its natural state, we of the armies have still work to perform in the furtherance of humanity, protection of human rights, releasing of enemy territory and cleaning the vast area laid waste by the devastation of war.

How far this regiment will be called upon in the execution of these duties is not known, it perhaps may be assigned to none of them. Aside from the foregoing there is still another duty, one that calls for individual efforts that cannot be disregarded if we as an organization and individuals expect to sustain the good name made. This is discipline and military bearing, soldierly conduct and the respect of the rights and persons of others.

The return home of organizations for final muster out of the service, whenever this should be, should show an organization in which nothing for criticism can be found and here is where the individual, by his bearing and conduct, can make the regiment 100 per cent. perfect.

Within the next day or two the regiment will be moved into a back area where a reorganization will take place. Ranks will be filled, promotions made and the regiment tuned up in general.

Drill and instruction will be resumed and the Commanding Officer calls upon every officer and man to put forward his best effort to make the regiment all that can be desired in a military organization.

Permanent relief from the sector came at noon the following day, when the 109th took up the positions. And a few days later, when word came that the Army of Occupation was en route to Germany and the Huns had withdrawn from all of France, even these positions in the Woevre were abandoned. Then, with typical American expression, came a memorandum from the Corps Headquarters announcing that trenches could be taken over by French farmers for purposes of agriculture, and

where barbed wire was in the way, the French residents should not be hindered in its removal. The plow had given way to the sword once again in a country where for four years soldiers of the belligerents had fought for each other's life, and hundreds had paid the price.

The 112th quietly slipped back into the region of Buxières, some six miles from St. Mihiel in an easterly direction. Regimental Headquarters was established in the town the night of November 12th, and the other units, completing the march from the line via Pannes, Nonsard and Heudicourt, took up positions on the hills and in German barracks within a four-mile radius.

One of the saddest features of the last twenty-four hours of battle was the wounding of Captain Harry F. Miller, of Meadville, who was acting as battalion commander. Due to our own barrage falling short, Captain Miller was caught in the fire as he advanced, wounded by shrapnel in seven places, the most serious being in the back of the neck. So critical was his condition for a week that he could not be moved; and then, when chances seemed favorable for his recovery, he was placed in an ambulance and sent to Base Hospital 85 at Toul. There, a few days later, he received his commission as Major—a promotion he had so well earned, not only for his vigorous and coolheaded conduct in the Woevre, but for the manner in which he handled his battalion at all times since arriving in France. His men played a prominent part in the war game at Fismes and Fismette, and did no small share, too, in winning for it the glory that the Ar-

gonne brought to the officers and men of Colonel Rickards' command.

It was characteristic of the man who had guided the destinies of the 112th and looked after the welfare of its 3000 men to exclaim, when the last shot was fired: "Thank God, it is all over!" Long before, even before the regiment had departed for Camp Hancock, and when the old 16th still claimed western Pennsylvania as its home and boasted of its achievements as a separate unit, he had promised to look after "each soldier as his son"; in the long nights of tramping, in the effort to make these men of his—"my boys," as he liked to call them—comfortable, no one will ever know what effort was expended and to what exent Colonel Rickards carried his pleas to make the hardships of the army game the lighter, especially in those days when the roughest part of the contest was on, and men dropped, killed and wounded, as they carried the flag of their country farther into the land of the Hun.

With the same kindly attitude, he directed the affairs of the Regiment during the other trying days that were to follow the armistice signing and the months that were to intervene before the old outfit was actually aboard ships, sailing homeward.

CHAPTER XVII

THE STORY OF THE CASUALTY LIST

Infantry Hit Hardest of All Units Engaged, 112th's Losses Being 2156—Officers Played Heroic Rôle—Their Losses 18 Killed and 37 Wounded—Much Booty Taken—Doughboys Hiked 375 Kilos.

THE official admission that the 28th Division stands fourth on the final Army casualty list and first on the roster of National Guard Regiments participating in front-line engagements is eloquent proof that the Keystone organization was in the forefront of battle.

The latest War Department table of dead and wounded indicates that the 28th sustained 16,277 casualties, of which 2531 represent those whose bodies still sleep in the furrowed, shell-plowed fields of France. This was Pennsylvania's contribution through the National Guard to the World War.

And proof again that it is the doughboy who goes right into the enemy lines, who bears the shock and the brunt of the conflict, and who at all times pays the price, is the added statement that 12,163 infantrymen were either killed, wounded or listed as missing during the period of four and a half months that the 28th Division was in action overseas.

Figures are not always the most interesting evidence in the world, and yet it is the list of official totals that the War Department recognizes and which furnishes testimony to the world for years afterward that a division

played its rôle superbly. It is only natural that such veteran divisions as the 2d, 1st and 3d, those which were into the war game far in advance of the 28th, should sustain the heaviest casualties. The part they played is among the bravest and most heroic in history.

While the 112th Infantry as part of the 28th Division had but 2156 casualties, exceeded in number by all three of the other infantry regiments of the division, it must be remembered that judicious tactics, careful planning of attacks and their opportune execution have a bearing on the number of casualties any regiment will sustain. The 112th was through the hellfire of it all on every front that the division was assigned to; good luck and a good commander helped keep the toll of life within bounds.

The advance on the Ourcq and the Vesle, during the period from July 28th to September 7th, proved costlier to every infantry unit of the 28th Division than even the hard-fought passage of the Argonne Forest, yet in number of days engaged the latter campaign actually claimed a heavier toll.

The figures for all front-line engagements for the four infantry regiments of the 28th follow:

Fifth German Offensive, July 14th to July 27th

	Killed	Severely Wounded	Slightly Wounded	Missing	Total
109th Infantry	109	123	631	458	1321
111th Infantry	31	68	304	26	429
112th Infantry	51	53	266	11	381
110th Infantry	51	12	62	225	350

ADVANCE ON OURCQ AND VESLE, JULY 28TH TO SEPTEMBER 7TH

	Killed	Severely Wounded	Slightly Wounded	Missing	Total
110th Infantry	314	235	1168	86	1803
109th Infantry	85	163	874	211	1333
111th Infantry	193	131	843	90	1257
112th Infantry	122	92	461	196	871

MEUSE-ARGONNE OFFENSIVE, SEPTEMBER 26TH TO OCTOBER 9TH

	Killed	Severely Wounded	Slightly Wounded	Missing	Total
110th Infantry	128	140	704	259	1231
109th Infantry	68	97	486	193	844
111th Infantry	162	91	483	69	805
112th Infantry	146	77	390	51	664

THIAUCOURT SECTOR, OCTOBER 15TH TO NOVEMBER 11TH

	Killed	Severely Wounded	Slightly Wounded	Missing	Total
111th Infantry	29	24	166	97	316
112th Infantry	28	34	170	8	240
109th Infantry	11	19	137	59	226
110th Infantry	10	9	44	29	92

Division figures—including infantry, artillery, machine gun battalions and all other units—show that the 28th's losses in the four general engagements and between actions were:

	Killed	Severely Wounded	Slightly Wounded	Missing	Total
5th German offensive....	261	311	1507	720	2799
Advance on Vesle.....	786	812	4229	596	6423
Meuse-Argonne drive ...	549	468	2442	585	4044
Thiaucourt sector	84	96	638	193	1011
Between actions	112	185	531	156	984

The period described as "between actions" includes the period of lying in reserve and during the relief, comprising such dates as May 15 to June 29; June 30 to July 13; September 8 to September 25; October 8 to October 15, and the figures for these intervals, as shown by the official report, are:

	Killed	Severely Wounded	Slightly Wounded	Missing
May 15–June 29	0	2	11	0
June 30–July 13	25	59	38	23
September 8–September 25	41	45	196	26
October 8–October 15	46	79	286	107

Casualties of the 112th Infantry, subdivided by headings, show: Killed, 347; severely wounded, 256; slightly wounded, 1287; missing, 266; total all engagements, 2156.

In the number of replacements received, the division likewise stood fourth, with 22,384 new men to fill the ranks and take the places of those who had been sent to the rear wounded or who had fallen on the field of battle for the last time. The 2d, 1st and 3d Divisions, just as in the casualty list, head the replacement totals.

It would require a special volume, or perhaps two, to give by name a complete roster of the replacements received and the casualties sustained by such an organization as the 112th Infantry, and so no attempt is made. Even such an effort, confined to a single company, would be a laborious process, with mistakes and errors so likely that it would take weeks to compile an accurate account.

However, in the belief that the doughboy is appreciative of those who led him over the top, who saw to his welfare on the hike or in billets, those who, as officers,

played the war game as best they knew, a list of the officer casualties is submitted.

No figures are more eloquent of duty well done than those which show that 18 112th officers were killed and 37 wounded in action.

The list of killed follows:

KILLED IN ACTION SOUTH OF MARNE.

William C. Orr, 2d Lt., Co. E; killed in action by shrapnel early on morning of July 15th at Petit Noue.

KILLED IN ACTION NORTH OF MARNE.

Harold D. Speakman, 2d Lt., Co. E; killed in action by shellfire, July 25th, near Courpoil, during the record advance by Captain Phelps' 2d Battalion.

James M. Henderson, Captain, Co. D; killed in action by shrapnel July 25th, in Fôret de Fère, near Courpoil. The shell which killed Capt. Henderson made a direct hit.

Emil E. H. Lauterwasser, 2d Lt., Co. L; killed in action by shellfire, August 7th, near Villa Savoye. This enemy shellfire, in point of concentration, was declared by Colonel Rickards to be the heaviest of the war up until that time.

Joseph A. Landry, 2d Lt., Co. G; killed in action at Fismette, morning of August 27th. The story of Landry's bravery during that surprise attack is one of the most interesting pages of the regiment's history.

KILLED IN THE ARGONNE FOREST

Louis Raymond Abel, 1st Lt., Co. M; killed in action, September 27th, by gunshot wound above the heart.

Hugh R. Doane, Captain, Co. H; killed in action, September 29th, by gunshot wound. Capt. Doane had previously been wounded in action in fighting south of the Marne in July.

Randall S. Houghton, 2d Lt., Co. A; killed in action by machine gun fire, September 29th. Houghton had received his commission only a short time previous; he was one of the best liked of the young lieutenants in the command—a Corry boy of whom all were proud.

Frederick O. Blankenship, 1st Lt., Co. L; killed in action on September 28th by gunshot wound. He was one of the old 16th officers.

Walter V. Agin, 2d Lt., Co. D; killed in action, October 1st.

Philip E. Kriechbaum, 2d Lt., Co. C; killed in action, October 2d, by gunshot wound.

Walter J. Flynn, 2d Lt., Co. D; fatally wounded in action, September 29th, by machine gun fire.

Victor Volz, 2d Lt., Co. F; fatally wounded by shrapnel and exploding pistol ammunition, October 3d, in Argonne.

James A. Shannon, Lieut.-Colonel; died October 7th from gunshot wound received when a Hun sniper picked him off. Colonel Shannon was watching the taking of Châtel Chéhery from a doorway in the town when he received his fatal wound.

Frank R. Fleming, 1st Lt., Co. M; died from wounds on October 11th, received in action on third day of Argonne battle. He was in command of his company when German snipers picked him off in an open field. He was also wounded slightly at Nogentel on July 15th.

Robert F. Arnold, 2d Lt., Co. H; died October 13th from shrapnel wound received in action in early part of Argonne battle.

KILLED ON THIAUCOURT FRONT

Daniel F. McCarthy, 2d Lt., Co. D; died October 23d at Base Hospital 22 from pneumonia, following wounds received in action.

Alexander M. Russell, 2d Lt., Co. I; killed in action, November 2d, by shellfire near Haumont.

The names of the officers of the 112th Infantry who were wounded in action follow:

WOUNDED SOUTH OF MARNE

Jacob B. Abbott, 2d Lt., Co. G; July 16th, near Arrouard; slightly.

William E. Franks, 1st Lt., Co. C; July 15th, near Arrouard; severely.

Reuben J. Sharpe, Captain, Co. E.; gassed July 16th, at Petit Noue.

Lucius M. Phelps, Captain, Co. G; July 15th, near Arrouard; slightly wounded; severely wounded by shrapnel, August 27th, near Fismes.

Adolph G. Timm, 1st Lt., Co. E; slightly wounded by shrapnel, July 16th, near Arrouard.

William R. Wadsworth, 1st Lt., Co. E; gassed, July 16th, near Arrouard.

Oscar F. Jacobs, 2d Lt., M. G. Co.; severely wounded, July 15th, near Arrouard.

Wounded North of the Marne

Eric S. Munson, 1st Lt., Co. I; action near Hill 204, July 7th; slightly; shellshock, action at Fismes, August 12th.

Charles B. Smathers, Major, 1st Bn.; gassed, July 25th, near Courpoil.

Albert A. L. Young, 2d Lt., Co. H; action near Hill 204; wounded in arm; later captured in action of August 27th at Fismette.

Wounded in Action Along the Vesle

Byron L. Ackerly, 2d Lt., Co. H; August 8th, near Fismes; returned to United States; wound severe.

James E. Dillon, 1st Lt., Co. K; gassed near Fismes, August 7th, and shellshocked, October 4th, in Argonne.

Milford W. Fredenburg, 1st Lt., Co. H; slightly wounded by shrapnel at Fismette, August 27th.

Roy L. McBride, 2d Lt., Co. A; gassed, September 5th, at Fismes.

Arthur J. Olson, 2d Lt., Co. C; August 9th, at Fismes.

Henry J. Pleacher, 2d Lt., Co. L; severely gassed, August 8th, near Resson Fme.

Samuel A. Souder, Jr., 2d Lt., Co. E; August 9th, near Fismes.

Carl C. Tintsman, 1st Lt., Co. H; gassed, August 4th, near Resson Fme.

Ben E. Turner, 2d Lt., Co. H; caught in machine gun fire, August 27th, at Fismette.

Wynne Van Schaick, 2d Lt., Co. L; gassed and wounded by shellfire, August 26th, near Fismes.

Paul E. Ziegler, Captain, Hq. Co.; August 20th, at Fismes; wound slight.

John L. Heilman, 1st Lt., Co. H; August 8th, near Fismes.

Robert D. Jenkins, Captain, Co. I; wounded by bomb, August 7th, near Fismes.

Joseph E. Kerwan, 2d Lt., Co. H; gassed, August 8th, near Resson Fme.

Roy R. Kriechbaum, 1st Lt., Co. C; wounded by machine gun fire, August 9th, at Fismette.

Harry D. McCluskey, 1st Lt., Co. F; gassed, August 9th, near Fismette.

John F. McCloskey, 2d Lt., Co. G, shellfire, August 9th, at Fismes.

Wounded in Action in the Argonne

Joseph A. Elgin, Captain, Co. L; slight machine gun wound, September 28th.

Thomas A. Elgin, 2d Lt., Co. K; September 26th, in Argonne.

Cecil R. Everett, 1st Lt., Co. B; gassed, October 2d, in Argonne.

Percy W. LaPaze, 2d Lt., Co. A; gunshot wound, October 2d, in Argonne.

Frederick I. McKelvey, 2d Lt., Co. M; severe machine gun wound, September 27th, in Argonne.

Hoyt R. Ogram, 2d Lt., Co. D; September 29th, in Argonne.

Frederick L. Pond, 1st Lt., Co. B; gunshot wound, September 29th, in Argonne.

Frank L. Ruffing, 1st Lt., Co. E; gunshot wound, October 3d, in Argonne.

Wounded in Action on Thiaucourt Sector

Harry F. Miller, Captain, Co. B; severely wounded, November 10th. Captain Miller was promoted to Major while in the hospital.

James C. Strange, 2d Lt., Co. E; gunshot wound, October 18th.

When the 112th went into action on any front, officers were with the men, and the casualty list is proof of the fact that they were exposed to the same danger, endured the same hardships and were the same heroes in the line as the doughboy who fought on day to day and kept the game going in America's favor. A review of the officers who were with the regiment at Camp Hancock, who stayed with it through the campaign in France, and of the changing personnel, as new officers came to the organization, forms one of the interesting phases of the life of the regiment.

Throughout the entire training period at Camp Hancock and during the tour of active service in France, Colonel George C. Rickards, with the exception of those periods when he acted as Brigade Commander, was in charge of the regiment.

Lieut.-Colonel Robert B. Gamble, of Meadville, second in command at Camp Hancock, remained in that position until the latter part of July, when, in the Fôret de Fère, he was sent to a hospital and was later assigned to duty elsewhere, finally being given charge of the Brittany leave area on the west coast of France. He never returned to the regiment.

The roster of the old 16th Infantry on September 20, 1917, after its arrival at Camp Hancock, shows the following officers in command of their respective units:

First Battalion—Major Charles B. Smathers; Lieutenant Charles R. Galbrath, Adjutant. Second Battalion—Major Charles E. Bordwell; Lieutenant Frank

L. Ruffing, Adjutant. Third Battalion—Major Charles F. Clyde; Lieutenant Howard K. Gibson, Adjutant.

Captain James C. Shaw, of Oil City, who was Regimental Adjutant on the border and who served in the same capacity at Camp Hancock, proved on every occasion overseas that he was the man fitted for the job. He was Colonel Rickards' right-hand officer at all times, and no one could have had a greater interest in the regiment, paying particular attention to the hundred and one odd details, than he. Recommended for promotion to Major for his valued services, it is to be regretted that he was not given the honor before returning from overseas duty.

The roster of company commanders on September 20, 1917, forms an interesting comparison with one on December 1, 1918. The Camp Hancock list on the previous date follows;

Supply Company—Captain Archie M. Stivanson, of Oil City.
Machine Gun Company—Captain Edgar L. Rhone, of Bradford.
Sanitary Detachment—Major William C. Hogan, of Bradford.
Company A—Captain Rasselas W. Brown, of Corry.
Company B—Captain Harry F. Miller, of Meadville.
Company C—Captain Frederick P. Schoonmaker, of Bradford.
Company D—Captain James M. Henderson, of Oil City.
Company E—Captain Rueben J. Sharpe, of Kane.
Company F—Captain David L. Sutherland, of Franklin.
Company G—Captain Lucius M. Phelps, of Erie.
Company H—Captain Charles F. Geary, of Ridgway.
Company I—Captain William Tribble, of Warren.
Company K—Captain Daniel H. Core, of Kittanning.
Company L—Captain Benjamin R. Williams, of Butler.
Company M—Captain Fred McCoy, of Grove City.

The Headquarters Company, which before the reorganization in October, 1917, consisted only of a band of 28 pieces and the orderly section, was in command of Captain Shaw. It remained for Captain Paul E. Ziegler, formerly in command of Company A, of the old 8th Regiment, York, Pa., to take over the affairs of the growing organization of 300 and some odd men early in 1918 and make of it the splendid Headquarters Company that it was during and after the war.

The reorganization plan, combining the old 8th and 16th Regiments of Pennsylvania during October, 1917, at Camp Hancock, brought to the old 16th (then to be known in history thereafter as the 112th United States Infantry) many efficient and splendid officers, a great number of whom remained with the organization and took part in the campaigns in France.

Among the 8th Regiment officers who were attached or assigned to the 112th during December, 1917, were: Majors George B. Corbin, Lester S. Huber, William H. Baublitz; Captains Harry H. Baker, William A. Kessinger, Ralph C. Crow, Paul E. Ziegler, Robert H. Whetstone, Harry M. Stine, Abraham Hinch, John T. Bretz, Charles H. Hatfield, John M. Rudy, James E. Burr, Robert D. Jenkins, Jerry J. Hartman and George G. Heit. In addition, there were many popular First and Second Lieutenants who became part of the 112th Regiment, but it was not until a month or so later that most of them were given definite places in the organization.

Of the 8th Regiment Captains named above, only three crossed the Atlantic as members of the 112th. They were Captain Paul E. Ziegler, commanding Headquarters Company; Captain John T. Bretz, commanding Company A; Captain Robert D. Jenkins, commanding Company I. Others were discharged or transferred before the final organization in April, 1918, and the preparation for overseas duty.

Of the veteran First Lieutenants who accompanied the 112th overseas, the name of John G. Wiestling should not be omitted. He had served as Battalion Adjutant with the old 8th Regiment, and on joining the 112th was assigned to the Headquarters Company, with which organization he was identified throughout the war. When the time came for the regiment to return to the United States, he was the senior First Lieutenant of the entire regiment.

The 112th had not been long overseas until it was evident that the eight months' training at Camp Hancock had been productive of real fruit; the officers demonstrated in their every-day work that they were not mere men in uniform. They had gripped the essentials of the military game, had learned much of the tactics and only needed a finishing course "under fire" to prove that their patriotism, their training and their ambitions were true to the core.

No finer body of officers ever went into action, facing an enemy that threatened to overrun France and seize Paris, than those who were under Colonel Rickards' com-

mand when the memorable July 4, 1918, became a part of history, and the 112th hurried to the front to stem a German advance that did not materialize, though it had been threatened.

It was on July 6th, when the first detail of the 112th was engaged at Hill 204, that Second Lieutenant Herman S. Marshall, of Meadville, who had earned his gold bar the previous December, distinguished himself in action in his handling of the trench mortar platoon. When his men coaxed him to go over the top and clean out enemy machine gunners he was the first to make the dash, crying to his enthusiastic men to follow. Lieutenant Marshall later in the game was promoted to First Lieutenant and during October, 1918, was made Captain, a reward for faithful services, and assigned to the command of Company K.

In the same action at Hill 204 Second Lieutenant Albert A. L. Young, one of the newer officers of the regiment, proved his ability to clean out Germans, and got rid of half a dozen, although severely wounded in the arm. It was part of the game of war that a few days after his return from the hospital he should be sent to the front at Fismes and Fismette and be caught in the Hun dash in the latter village on August 27th.

The first 112th officer to be killed on the field of battle was Second Lieutenant William C. Orr, who perished in the heavy German shellfire of July 15th in the district south of the Marne River and to the north of Fays Farm and La Chapelle.

Within the next ten days Captain James M. Henderson, of Oil City, beloved commander of Company D, was blown to pieces near Vente Jean Guillaume, to the east of the town of Épieds. On the same day, but in a different part of the woods, Second Lieutenant Harold D. Speakman, only commissioned while the regiment was at Fays Farm, was caught in the heavy shellfire and fell, dying, while Captain Phelps, leading his battalion in a gallant rush, forged ahead. Major Smathers was gassed in the same action, sent to a hospital at Vichy, France, and did not again join the regiment until late in August, during the second tour of duty at Fismes.

By this time the officer personnel of the regiment had changed greatly; men who had attended the Officer Candidates' School at Camp Hancock had been commissioned and were taking active part in the fighting.

Meanwhile, in the action north of La Chapelle, Captain Reuben Sharpe was gassed and sent to a hospital; he never rejoined the regiment, his experience as a post-office manager being utilized to advantage at the Central Postoffice at Tours and later at Toul, France. Captain Sutherland had long since—from June 9th, in fact—been at an Army School at Langres, later to be given an important post on the general staff of the Seventh Army Corps, and finally assigned to G-4, Third Army.

Captain Schoonmaker, who had come overseas before the regiment, was named Assistant Chief of Staff of the 92d Division; Captain Geary had been discharged from the service and his post was filled by Captain Hugh R.

Doane, famous bayonet instructor of Camp Hancock training days.

Captain Daniel H. Core had been named Personnel Officer, in charge of all company clerks and the statistical section of the regiment; Captain "Ben" Williams was assistant judge advocate for the 27th, or New York National Guard Division, and Captain Stivanson's place had been taken by Captain Ralph D. McLouth, then (in July, 1918) the Regimental Supply Officer.

Major Clyde never rejoined the regiment from the time he was assigned to duty in March, 1918, as Assistant Inspector-General of the division, and when he was sent to France he was given a post with similar duties, but not with the 28th Division.

So it is evident, as days passed, that even the 112th Regiment's general outline, so far as personnel was concerned, was constantly changing; a list of officers made one week became a thing quite different a fortnight afterward; as one action followed another those who were wounded were replaced by other officers in the regiment or by new ones then assigned, and so the replacement process was ever in force.

Too much cannot be said of the work done by three Captains—Miller, Phelps and McCoy—in charge of the 1st, 2d and 3d Battalions, respectively, in the Fismes-Fismette campaign. Captain Phelps made a name for himself and the 2d Battalion in the dash to the Red Cross Farm while the regiment was holding the line in Vente Jean Guillaume and to the east of Épieds—two days of

real hellfire fighting, with welcome relief by the Rainbow, or 42d Division. And in the trying days about Fismes, Captain Harry F. Miller, of Meadville, proved himself a man adapted to the occasion; equal praise can be said of Captain Fred McCoy, at all times at the head of his command and leading the battalion into the thick of things and driving the Hun back at the same time. In these three Colonel Rickards surely had a trio of Captain-Majors on whom he could rely.

They did equally splendid work in the Argonne, and Captain Phelps soon was wearing a Major's leaf—and then, in a few weeks, he was returned to the U. S. A., to become an instructor at Camp Dix.

Captain Miller's promotion to Major came to him while he was in the hospital, following the severe wounds he received on Sunday, November 10th.

Captain McCoy's promotion to a higher grade did not come until months later; just when the regiment was packing up and preparing to leave the billeting area west of Colombey les Belles, orders came through 28th Division Headquarters authorizing him to wear the gold leaf.

It has already been stated that Captain Graff and Captain Smith won promotion to the next higher grade through splendid work at Châtel Chéhery. Both officers were First Lieutenants when they went overseas.

In no other campaign of the war in which the 112th participated did the regiment so fully demonstrate its fighting and its staying qualities as in the Argonne fighting. It was a battle day and night against cleverly con-

cealed machine gun nests, a battle against thick and almost unsurmountable undergrowth—but somehow, only the officers and men who took part can tell, the regiment forged ahead, and despite severe counter-attacks, succeeded in dominating Chène Tondu and in brilliantly capturing Châtel Chéhery, two military feats that won division and corps recognition in General Orders.

The list of officers who were killed or wounded in that thirteen-day battle has already been given. Behind each fatality or wound is a story of typical American grit; officers went into the line with doughboys and fought in the same fashion; there was no distinction—and it was because of such bravery that the Argonne to-day stands out from the American history in France as one of the truly magnificent exploits of the war.

So when the Argonne battle had been fought and the armistice had brought to an end the patrol days on the Thiaucourt sector, the list of company commanders hardly resembled that of Camp Hancock days. Late in November it looked something like this:

Company A—First Lieutenant Wallace W. Wellman.
Company B—Captain Robert E. Vaughan.
Company C—Captain Roy R. Kriechbaum.
Company D—Captain Cyrus G. Whitehill.
Company E—Captain Harry D. McCluskey.
Company F—Captain Joseph P. Connell.
Company G—First Lieutenant William W. Shatzer.
Company H—First Lieutenant John L. Heilman.
Company I—Captain Robert D. Jenkins.
Company K—Captain Herman S. Marshall.

Company L—Captain James F. Leetch.

Company M—Captain Fred McCoy.

Supply Company—Captain Ignatius J. Meenan.

Sanitary Detachment—Major Francis R. Burke.

Machine Gun Company—Captain Edgar L. Rhone.

Headquarters Company—Captain Paul E. Ziegler.

First Battalion—Major John F. Graff, Jr.; First Lieutenant William B. Murray, Adjutant.

Second Battalion—Major William G. Smith; First Lieutenant William J. Robinson, Adjutant.

Third Battalion—Captain Fred McCoy, acting Major; First Lieutenant Howard K. Gibson, Adjutant.

Personnel Officer—Captain Daniel H. Core.

Regimental Gas Officer—First Lieutenant James H. Holmes.

Intelligence Officer—Captain S. A. Fenno.

Operations Officer—First Lieutenant Carl R. Freehafer.

Captain Whitehill, of Company D, was only a Sergeant when he went to Camp Hancock in September, 1917; Captain Meenan had been assigned to the Supply Company when Captain McLouth was evacuated to a hospital late in October, 1918; and Major Francis R. Burke had been with the Sanitary Detachment ever since Major Hogan left, during the first tour of duty at Fismes and Fismette.

Lieutenants Carl R. Freehafer and William J. Robinson were promoted to Captains several months later, and the latter was made regimental Intelligence Officer, Captain Fenno having left the regiment late in November for a staff school and then being sent to the United States. In December First Lieutenant John D. Dickson became regimental Gas Officer.

With the return of the officers from German prison camps during the Christmas season, Captain Schmelzer was assigned to command Company G, and Lieutenant Fredenburg, who was soon after to become Captain, took charge of his old organization, Company H. First Lieut. Philip C. Burdick, one of the quietest and most likable officers in the regiment and one of the most efficient, during the course of days resumed his post as Adjutant of the 2d Battalion. Minor changes continued to be made during the remainder of the stay in France.

No history of the 112th Regiment's officers would be complete unless the story and the name of each one associated with the regiment during the period in the front line could be told. But there were many changes, many new faces and incidents were so numerous that no attempt is made to mention all.

Yet through all those strenuous days in the zone of advance, Colonel George C. Rickards was the guiding spirit. When he was at Fort Sam Houston, with other infantry Colonels, from January to April, 1918, Lieut.-Colonel Gamble had charge of the regiment, but at all times in France, except those periods when he was acting Brigade Commander for ten days or two weeks every now and then he was fighting with and for his men. Though fifty-eight years of age, a birthday he celebrated in a dugout near Fismes during the second tour of duty for the 112th in that sector, he endured the hardships of hiking at all hours, marches through the rain and cold and exposure to real war.

If ever an officer led his men into battle with higher principles and a greater resolve than Colonel Rickards, the records do not show it; thoughts for the welfare and comfort of his men were always uppermost in his mind, no matter what the occasion. He never knew fear, and during the first days of the Argonne fighting exposed himself—ofttimes needlessly, officer friends assert—to Hun machine gun snipers.

In the Thiaucourt sector the 112th patrols, arranged and planned by him personally, reflected great credit on his ability as an organizer and tactician—qualities, though, which had long before that been generally recognized. The part that the regiment played in the Fismes fight, taking over a whole brigade sector and making a better record than even the brigade did, is also part of his fine military record overseas.

His is a record of more than forty years in the military service. He enlisted as a private on June 9, 1877, in the Venango Grays, which later became the 16th Pennsylvania Infantry. As a member of Company F, he was promoted to corporal February 2, 1880; to first sergeant on August 1, 1881, and commissioned as Second Lieutenant October 21, 1881. His promotion continued, and on July 21, 1883, he was made Captain of Company F, and when he removed to Oil City a few years later he was made Captain of Company D, November 15, 1888. He was commissioned Major on August 11, 1891, and Lieut.-Colonel November 29, 1892. Besides being under fire in the service as a National Guardsman, Colonel

Rickards was in the service during the Spanish-American War. He was mustered in as Lieut.-Colonel of the 16th Pennsylvania Volunteers on May 10, 1898, and was commissioned Colonel on October 24th that year, serving until being mustered out on December 28, 1898. Returning then to the Pennsylvania National Guard, he resumed his commission as Lieut.-Colonel until 1907, when he was promoted to the higher grade, and from that time on, during his service in the National Guard, on the Mexican border, June 26, 1916, to January 17, 1917; at Camp Hancock and throughout the World War he was Colonel Rickards.

Had it been the policy of the War Department to recognize ability in the National Guard instead of looking to the Regular Army for promising material, there is no question but that Colonel Rickards, having proved his efficiency in the early days in the Southland and in France, would have been given a higher grade.

"And while," he said one day to a group of officers at Buxières, France, " my friends may think I regret not having been given a star as Brigadier General in this war, I am well satisfied to return to my home in God's country, with the respect of the people back there, knowing that I have at least done the average man's part in the war."

He meant every word of it, and six months afterward, when he came home with the boys of the 112th, the homefolk demonstrated beyond expectations the love and regard they held for the man who had guided the destinies

of the outfit "over there," caring for the men in the ranks as though each were his son and fulfilling a promise to that effect which he had made before starting overseas.

It may be said of Colonel Rickards that he never asked an officer or an enlisted man to go any place that he would not go himself.

It is a foregone conclusion that it was his ability and guiding hand which brought honor and recognition to the 112th Infantry; the man in the ranks looked upon him as more than a mere officer. Rickards was a man at all times—square, honest, upright and courageous to a fault.

In furnishing a résumé of what his Regiment accomplished in France, many details must be omitted for sake of space.

A partial list of the material captured includes: Five 77 German field pieces; eight anti-tank guns; one German tank; 55 heavy and 163 light Maxim machine guns; 1500 German gas masks; numerous rifles, steel helmets and hundreds of German shells; three trench mortars; two minnenwerfers; a German hospital with an estimated value of $10,000 and much property of which no record was kept.

The War Department officially credits the 28th Division with making a battle-front advance of ten kilometers. The 112th and other units of the Division made gains of that distance in the Marne and Ourcq actions alone; while the ground taken in the Argonne was equal to the grand total given out by the War Department.

General Mangin, in his commendation of July 30th, addressed to the 28th Division, makes this statement:

"91 guns, 7200 prisoners, immense booty, ten kilometers of country reconquered; this is your portion of the spoil of this victory," referring to the thrust beginning July 18th.

Prisoners captured at Fismes and Fismette totaled one officer and 60 men; Germans taken in the Argonne by the 112th, estimated at more than 400; while in the Thiaucourt action, three officers and more than 150 enemy soldiers were taken captive.

As for hiking through France—and the doughboy hiked by night and fought by day, much of the time—a total distance of 375 kilometers was covered by the youngsters who wore those heavy hobnail brogans and participated in every march. This includes only the kilometers covered up to the signing of the armistice and the march from the front line to positions in the "rest area" at Buxières and the German hillside barracks, where Thanksgiving and Christmas were to be spent quietly and with but one thought:

That the departure for the old U. S. A. might not be long delayed.

PART THREE
AFTER THE ARMISTICE

LISTLESS DAYS AT BUXIÈRES AND IN THE MEUSE VALLEY—LE MANS, ST. NAZAIRE AND MUSTER-OUT AT CAMP DIX.

PERIOD FROM NOVEMBER 12, 1918, TO MAY 6, 1919

CHAPTER XVIII

HOLIDAYS THAT BROUGHT THOUGHTS OF HOME

A Remarkable Hallowe'en Party at Pannes—Dreary, Rainy Days at Buxières—Bringing Christmas Cheer to French Kiddies—Mont Sec and Its Wonderful Tunnels—Rumors That Changed Over Night.

JUST because this little volume has been a record of what happened on the line or because it has told now and then with perhaps more than necessary detail the shifting of troops, don't imagine that the doughboy didn't get joy out of life.

The doughboy did. He was the happiest man in the world while the war was on, and when the war ended the transition from the noise of the firing line and a certain indescribable freedom to the monotonous routine of training days was too much for him. When one rumor after another fell flat, blue days stared at him; yet he never lost that cheerful spirit.

To indicate his attitude during the closing days of the war; to show how he felt on Thanksgiving; in making plain what his desires were on Christmas Day and how hopefully he looked forward to a joyous New Year, the following stories, written at that time and sent home, are reproduced. They are given, not because they are unusual stories, but merely to show his attitude at the time.

UP THE LINE IN FRANCE,
NOVEMBER 1.

The most remarkable Hallowe'en party ever held within range of the German guns was held in a deserted French mansion on the Rue Rainbow in the town of [Pannes] last night. A ten-piece orchestra, the hits of Broadway a year ago and France to-day, songs that brought back memories of pre-trench days and encouraged thoughts of what we'll do after the war; pumpkin and prune pies, home-made candy, coffee as only the doughboys can serve it—these were the high spots of a remarkable evening, a night crowded with the best things the 112th orchestra could offer and an occasion that surpassed any other so far as the culinary aspect was concerned.

The doughboys want to make it plain that it was held at "Pat" Doyle's French mansion—but the house, in fact, which has been a home of luxury for a dozen of the lads for the past twelve days, in reality belongs to one as much as to the other; and when the orchestra came, with instruments, traps and trappings, and Hontz arrived on the scene with his pies and pastry, and Evan Holmes stalked in with plates full of home-made candy —the kind that has made many a Hallowe'en in the good old U. S. A. famous—well say, boys! The doughboys who were honor guests at this party were happy—happy in spite of the fact that long-range German guns, located somewhere over there in the Bois de Beney were

banging away, scattering shots around the hills and in the outer section of the town.

And up here in the mansion the orchestra was playing " Ireland Must Be Heaven " while the Germans tried to make it hell. Classic hits of other days—naming them only adds to the keenness of the delight these doughboys enjoyed—were on that remarkable program. The evening opened with " In San Domingo," followed by " Down Honolulu Way," and then the orchestra struck up " Sweet Little Buttercup." Candles flickered from the hastily constructed chandelier and old worn-out rugs, hung up at the windows to screen the light from watchful Hun aeroplanes, added a luxuriant aspect to the scene. Old King Louis XVI in the rosiest days couldn't have experienced more real delight than these boys, who listened to lilting swinging notes of " Sweet Little Buttercup "—and each fellow secretly wished that his best girl might be on the spot at just that particular time.

The evening went speedily. Fatima cigarettes, Melachrinos and Lucky Strikes curled upward in smoke as one selection after another signaled the passing of a remarkable occasion. " My Sweetie," " Teach Me to Smile," " How's Every Little Thing in Dixie "—bringing back memories of good old Camp Hancock days and those carefree moments back home—vied with " Mr. Jazz Himself," " Parisian Maxixe," " Liberty Bell " and famous old " Joan of Arc " for a place in the spotlight. Then the orchestra swung into more thought-producing, memory-inviting, tantalizing whirlwind dance numbers

—" Wasn't It Yesterday," " The Pennsylvania Volunteers " and even " Some Sunday Morning." Each seemed better than its predecessor, and the fast-accumulating enthusiasm of the doughboys hardly knew any bounds.

During those famous old training days at Hancock, when the boys double-timed it out to the drill field, the 112th Band blared and blazed away with " Some Sunday Morning "—and so there was more than passing interest in the playing of this particular number. " Underneath the Stars " (and it was a starry night outside at that), " Kangaroo Hop " and, characteristically, " Over the Top " brought the musical program to a successful conclusion. It was only 8.15 then, but the orchestra had been playing away for two solid hours, feasting on the appreciative applause and encouragement of delighted listeners. They could be described as " spectators," too; for the fellows were looking on the bright side of the war game, enjoying to the fullest one of the most superb programs the 112th orchestra had ever conceived, and at the same time trying to realize, with carpet under their feet, a piano from a German theatre in the corner and real cigarette and cigar smoke forming a sub-stratum in mid-air—well, boy, it was the greatest thing ever pulled off, the honor guests agree, within shell-range of the German Berthas or Minnies—or whatever type of Krupp rifle is hidden in the straggly woods " up the line." And the " line," by the way, is not so far away as many might suspect.

And the splendid part of it was, when the musical program was over, that an equally enjoyable occasion was to follow; the pies that Roy Hontz, of Lansford, Pa., had worked all day to bring and bake to the point of perfection; the candy that Evan Holmes had made and which officers, in to take a peek at the party, thought was worthy of a bribe; not to speak of more cigars, more cigarettes, coffee in abundance and cakes, Y. M. C. A. issued and home-made.

Furnishing the music of the evening was this orchestra, which gladly donated its services in lieu of the "feed" that they had surmised might follow: Donald W. Cameron, of Kittanning, pianist; John W. Surra, of Bradford, flute; John Yorke, of Oil City, clarinet; Granville Lane, of Oil City, French horn; Coulter Hoffman, of Franklin, trombone; Daniel J. Isles, of Waterford, N. Y., cornet; Silvan Hilliard, of Oil City, saxophone; Major Olmes, of Oil City, violin; James Mitchell, of Oil City, cornet; Ralph Van Wye, assistant band leader, of Niles, Ohio, flute.

When the musical part of the evening's program had come to a conclusion and the officers had vanished, the doughboys brought out their " feed "—and for the next hour and a half the real joy of the evening reigned. Participating in the repast were some of the notables of the rear echelon—the temporary untitled " counts " of the French mansion:

J. Fred Doyle, Headquarters Company, of Huntingdon; Ernest H. Mudgett and Emanuel Barnett, of

Gloversville, N. Y.; John O. Shearer, Headquarters Company, of Hershey; John D. Davis, Company B, of Lansford; Gerald A. Snyder, Company C, of Bradford; Evan E. Holmes, Company B, of Meadville; Roy W. Hontz, Company B, of Lansford; David B. Drolsbaugh, Headquarters Company, of Huntingdon; George F. Fidler, Headquarters Company, of Reading; Earl Baker, Company F, of Huntingdon; William F. Umbenhauer, Headquarters Company, of Port Carbon; Miles Earley, of Hummelstown; James A. Murrin, on duty at the advance P. C. up the line, but who happened to be "taking things easy" in the little town for a day or two. Harry D. Shriver, Headquarters Company, of Harrisburg, who is Colonel Rickards' own chauffeur, was there for part of the festivities, duty calling him elsewhere—"somewhere in France"—for part of the night.

No bombs dropped from Hun aeroplanes, no shells fired from menacing guns, not an untoward incident, not even a trifling accident marred the passing of this last day of October "up the line" for these happy doughboys. A few had seen and experienced the joys of Aix les Bains, but most of them had grown hardened to the fighting game through days and nights of hiking, through actual participation in it, through doing the "heavy part" of the struggle "over here"—and in these moments of relaxation they found the real delight, doughboy-made and doughboy-enjoyed.

When the day comes to move to another sector, when the word comes to take up a new place in the line, when these same fellows sling packs, shoulder rifles and march on, they will still have memories of the Hallowe'en spent on the Rue Rainbow in the town of [Pannes], up the line "somewhere in France." There have been many happy moments of relaxation, sometimes far apart to be sure—but it only takes such an occasion as that on October 31st to prove that the doughboy is still persistently cheerful, contentedly hopeful and, withal, the thorough soldier that a loving home folk has often pictured him—fun-loving, grateful to a fault and hard-working to a point of exhaustion.

Memories of old Rue Rainbow and the great French mansion, known as Doyle's above-ground dugout, may they grow richer with the passing months and years.

During the latter part of October the 28th Division was given the privilege of sending small groups of men from each company on leave, and the first three parties, starting from the front line at intervals of a few days, went to Aix les Bains. The third party to that popular resort left early on the morning of November 2d, and so it was my luck to be far to the rear on the closing days of the war—to participate in the premature but wildly enthusiastic peace parade of November 7th, and to take part again in the more solemn festivities of the 11th. So the following letter is self-explanatory:

AIX LES BAINS, NOVEMBER 11.

It's all over at last—the armistice is signed, and there is not a question in anyone's mind—especially in the A. E. F.—but that the suspension of hostilities, the abdication of the Kaiser, the new German government and the whole change of atmosphere on the other side of the Rhine ushers in that brightest day of all, for which we have fought and to which a nation has earnestly looked forward.

Dreams have almost come true; but it will not be so very long, let us hope, until we fellows will be marching over streets grown familiar in other days. We heard of the abdication of the Kaiser through papers printed at Grenoble and Geneva (Switzerland) on Sunday; to-day at 11 o'clock, just when the city was at its prettiest in the glow of a warm fall sun, a telegram brought word that the armistice had been signed.

Truly it is a great day. An hour later the flags of the Allies were being flung to the breeze in every corner of the town, the Tri-Color naturally predominating. This afternoon there is to be a parade, the entire French civil population and the American doughboys participating. We were scheduled to go back on the train at 3 P.M., but our cars have not arrived—and so, with the assurance of not leaving until to-morrow at the earliest—we fellows will be into the celebration more than ever.

It seems almost too good to be true. No matter how many days may elapse before we start homeward, we have that feeling of freedom from shellfire; we know we

can sleep at nights; know that no Hun bombing planes are coming—realize that we can live Camp Hancock war days over again—this time in the war zone of France (or Germany)—for I would not be surprised that we fellows would be called upon to do our share of holding Alsace and Lorraine and the Rhine valley. Perhaps some of these days, when I do get back up the line, I shall start my letter, " Somewhere in Germany "—and that is not a matter out of the range of possibility. Then the little French and the little German we know will be worked overtime; and we will work and do our bit from day to day, ever speculating when we shall be back in the U. S. A.

I still cling to the opinion that the 23d of April will see us on our way—that not later than Memorial Day we shall be back in the old town. How good and rich and precious does life seem to us now; how full the future is of possibilities; how hopeful have all the boys been and how doubly hopeful, and most grateful, they are to-day.

All nature knows, too, that the war is over, for this is the most beautiful November day I have ever seen—bright, cheerful, warm. They say this is St. Martin's weather—no matter what it is, little else does it remind us of than our Indian summer.

Of course, there will be work to be done and lots of it; there will be hikes and marches, and innumerable twists to the military game—but what a great relief to know that the day has passed when machine guns and shrapnel can maim and slay your own comrades. To

me that is the most beautiful feature of it all; to know that those of us who have played the game hard and lived, lived only by the grace of God—may look forward to seeing old New York harbor, some day not far distant.

I am glad that we could be in Aix this time; to rejoice with the French in the success of the Allied arms. It will not be hard to remember this trip—how we happened to be here when the armistice was signed; how we cheered and sang along with the rest; to us the Tri-Color and " The Marseillaise " are fast growing to be our comrades. They have grown familiar, day by day.

The parade was typically American, with plenty of the Française element. From " Hail, Hail the Gang's all Here " to " Over There," " The Marseillaise " and others, the selections the doughboys sang ran a wide gamut. There was no distinct line; American soldiers, French officers and poilus and the civil population gathered and clustered in front of the historic city hall, cheered the Allied national anthems, and then moved off more " en masse " than in parade formation.

The American band stationed at Aix headed the swarming column, and as the procession moved, flags and colors bobbed up and fluttered—new cheers arose. It is evident this is to be a real night of celebration and some of the doughboys are already tuning up.

Electric lights, used in moderation here, are lavishly aglow. The big state bath establishment looks more like an exposition building in its splendor of light than an ordinary structure.

The night is perfect, a faultless blue sky, a fine moon and the atmosphere is so clear the mountains are easily discernible. All nature knows a world has been praying for just such a day.

The most-heard remark as the parade passed was typical: " I'd like to be in New York to-night to see the celebration there."

But it cannot be many months until the celebration of all celebrations will come, and a whole brave nation over there will have a chance to know that we are glad to be home again. " Glad " is such a weak word, for the going home will be that far-off event of which we thought much and feared at the same time, the fortunes of war might prevent our seeing.

And now, we probably will leave to-morrow on the train. I just wanted to pen this little note to describe simply an epochal event here. I have seen much of Aix, and of that I will tell you in detail later.

Homer Rhodeheaver was here for two days and made a wonderful impression with his personality and songs. So far as travels are concerned, I visited the Abbaye, involving a boat trip; hiked to Chambotte, a great mountain; was up Mt. Revard; have taken three sulphur baths —great stuff!—and have hiked many places.

Then I have seen my share of movies here, seen good vaudeville, have eaten a dish of real ice cream (price 40 cents); and—well, that is about all. I know much mail will be there when I get back and I am anxious to get it.

Several days later the 112th boys on leave had rejoined the regiment, then in Buxières and the adjoining hills; learned that the rumors were divided between the 42d and 28th Divisions parading in Washington on Christmas Day, and a start into Germany, a long ten-day hike which the widely spread report declared would begin Monday, November 18th.

The 112th Infantry was in the Buxières area from the night of November 12th until early in the new year, when on January 6th the doughboys hit the dirt road for a long southward march for points then unknown. But Buxières was a rumor factory, due principally to the fact that it was not decided for some time just what organizations were to go into the Army of Occupation or the A. of O. reserve; even as late as the week before Christmas it was reported that the regiment might move into the Conflans area, as a step on the way to Luxemburg.

So on the life that was lived out in the broken houses and in the crowded German barracks amid the mud and the rain and the most desolate country, it seemed, on the face of the globe, these little notes to follow shed some light.

NIGHT, NOVEMBER 15.

Just as we were at supper at 4.15 this afternoon 400 Italian, Russian and French prisoners, just released by the Germans, marched through. Very few were in uniform; most of them wore ragged and ill-kept clothes; they looked tired and weary at heart. They weren't singing "Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here"—though I

MAIN THOROUGHFARE IN BUXIÈRES

This little town in the St. Mihiel salient, slightly to the northeast of St. Mihiel itself, was the headquarters of the 112th from November 12th until January 6th, when the 4-day hike southward began

A TYPICAL BILLETING AREA

This is Burey La Côte after it had been cleaned up—and it still looks dirty. When Companies C and D moved into it, it was positively the filthiest place in France where Keystone soldiers had been billeted—which was going some!

believe at heart the most of them were the happiest creatures on earth. Their appearance spoke greater than words of the treatment they had received and it was clearly evident from the total absence of stout men that Germany's rations had not been as liberal as ours.

Four hundred men! There was a story hidden in each fellow's heart that would wake up the world, no doubt. The long line just trudged along, in charge of several American soldiers; the men were going to the rear. The sun had set and the day was fast ending. But for them the sun was just coming over the horizon of brighter to-morrows.

A Little Town in France,
November 19.

I suppose within a very short while, instead of putting on the time-honored heading, " Somewhere in France," " A Little Town in France," or " A Sector in the Lines," we will be able to tell you where we are. The British soldiers are already doing that, and perhaps it is merely a matter of a few days until we fellows will get the word that it can be done. To-day's paper even announces the units which are entering Germany as representatives of the American Army of Occupation. We fellows aren't in the Army of Occupation, though a week ago at this time there were persistent rumors that we might be. We are just a few kilos removed from what had been our old lines.

To-day word came down indicating to us more than

ever that the war is over. Gas masks will no longer be carried, but " will be inspected once each week," the memorandum said. It also added, " Special attention will be devoted to completing individual equipment and providing adequate clothing for the men." Another part said that the line would no longer be held—that French civilians, returning to their homes in this area, should have the privilege of removing barbed wire obstacles, occupying trenches formerly held by American soldiers —all so that agriculture might be given attention.

Judging from the fuss they are making about cleaning up the little towns and the country in general, salvaging property and getting things into spick-and-span shape, we youngsters are to have the job of cleaning up France—after having cleaned up the Germans. The boys in the different units of the outfit went out to drill, as usual, to-day, only to be summoned and told to go on detail and " police " (or clean up) the area within a mile radius of their station. So they are scouring the hills, woods and fields, and billets this afternoon, gathering up the rubbish and putting it in piles, so that it can be hauled away. Salvaged property is also being gathered in, and will be taken to prescribed depots. As Colonel Rickards remarked, " We are cleaning up the country now."

The big supply of mail which arrived during the early part of last week has all been read, and now we are looking forward to the receipt of more letters; to-night or to-morrow ought to be big days for us—one good mail a week is the rule in the army. I have found a little time

to myself late in the evening, and so have read some of the *Collier's* and *Digests* which accumulated during my absence at Aix les Bains. It seems so long ago since I took that trip, as so much work has intervened since then. We are getting along swimmingly, however. Day in and day out, the talk is: " I wonder when we are going home." They are the border rumors all over again—only they get on your nerves, repeated and reiterated a thousand times. But it shows which way the wind is blowing—that the fellows' thoughts are all on getting back to New York, and then to their individual homes.

There is one feature I do not believe I have written about. When the war game was at its heaviest in the Argonne, Company F was left with but one officer—an officer who has been in the game every day of the scrap from Fismes to up the line in the Woevre. That was First Lieutenant Ross Thompson. I have talked with fellows who were through the rough stuff of the Argonne fighting with him; no Lieutenant demonstrated his fighting qualities better—and the men to-day love him the more for that. " There isn't one of us who wouldn't go through hell for Thompson," one fellow told me, " after the way he stuck to us and saw it through up there in the Argonne." Played out as many other officers were, fighting on doggedly from day to day without sleep and oftentimes with little or nothing to eat, he kept the game going and the spirits of his company at high tide.

At noon to-day, for want of thirty minutes' exercise, I climbed the hill which lies back of this château and from

the top I had a clear view of the great plain which stretches for five or six miles, and perhaps farther, to the horizon. There is only one hill in this great stretch of level land, while innumerable villages, each with its battered church spire or tower in the center, are easily discernible. They all have a deserted appearance, even in the midst of gradually increasing activity in this section.

The top of the hill was nothing more than a great plateau, with a splendid white pine forest that evidently did much to camouflage the activities of the Germans who held it. Even the narrow-gauge railroad, which seems to feed every artery of traffic around this sector, found its way to the top of the hill, and there was an abandoned planing mill there as well as a number of buildings. In addition, there were two German tanks—constructed of bamboo and painted to resemble the " real thing." Evidently they were for use in engagements where the Germans thought they could try the camouflage game and get away with it. The " tanks " were somewhat battered, but still had the semblance of what they were made to represent.

Our rest has come at last—the " rest " for which we were hoping in the days up the line is now here. At least, that is the only interpretation we can place on the cleaning-up-France program and the additional one of watchful waiting which we are now facing. To me it looks like a long wait, despite the many rumors to the contrary, until we set sail for " over there " and get back into the

activities of old. It is altogether possible, some say, that we may go farther south, and there train during the winter months. No matter where they take us, we will be playing the soldier for quite awhile; of that we feel quite certain. Winter clothes have been issued, and every man now has two blankets, and these, plus an overcoat, provide a fair degree of warmth.

We are still billeted in this once handsome château, and we bunk in the third story, using German mattresses to make the floor a good bed.

A Little Town in France,
November 23.

The sun is shining just as it has been for nearly fourteen days, and the fine winter weather we have been enjoying in this section of France continues. There is usually a heavy frost in the morning, and when we hustle down to breakfast at 6.45 it needs no urging for us to keep on the move. For some unknown reason, the usual morning offering of rice, bacon, bread and coffee was about an hour late to-day, and we stood outside, hopping around on one foot and then the other and flinging our arms as best we could, in order to stimulate warmth. Finally, we did eat; but it was after 8 o'clock then. Generally speaking, things are going O. K., but there is enough work to remind us every minute of the day and throughout the evening that the army still moves.

Our horses have all been turned in, and we can place but one interpretation on that: Either we are going to

move by truck or rail some of these days or else we will remain in this war-torn village for the winter. Ninety per cent. of us expect a movement within the coming week, and are inclined to the first belief. Some officers are confident that February will see us back in the States. I shall be satisfied if April sees us there, and we all feel confident that we will be back into the game of civilian life not later than Memorial Day, no matter what happens.

The band moved into this little town this morning, coming from over the hill some six kilos. For the past two weeks they have been in old German barracks there; now they are housed in some of the half-wrecked buildings of this little place, but quarters are much nicer—and then, too, it seems good, so far as we are concerned, to have the band here. The band is surely the big element of cheer in the army, and even the morning rehearsals prove attractive; and whenever the opportunity permits, some of us drop in to hear the best they have to offer. Three of the musicians are away, however, being at Band School at Chaumont: Chief Musician Roy Miller, Assistant Band Leader Ralph Van Wye and Musician Harland Mitchell. We miss these fellows and are hoping they will be back with us soon.

The band was down here the other evening, to give a concert for the benefit of the school of a thousand soldiers in charge of Lieut.-Colonel Joseph Thompson. Naturally, it created a big hit, and demonstrated to the fellows who come from other infantry outfits than the

112th that we have a band of which we may well be proud.

The first regimental parade that has been held since we were at Tremblay is being staged this afternoon not far from this town. Our famous old colors are flying again, and Color Sergeant John R. Kahle, who has been away for more than a month getting new glasses and who returned to duty yesterday, is on the job, carrying Old Glory. Another acting Color Sergeant is taking Miles Shoup's place while he is away at school.

It surely seemed good to see John Kahle back with the old outfit, and when he came in yesterday he got a warm greeting from the boys. It had been rumored that he had started back to the States, but his appearance in person gave the lie to that report—although he was out of luck for mail, which had been forwarded to the hospital at Toul. He told us of seeing a German observer drop 15,000 feet in a parachute the day before the war ended. The German aviator was killed by anti-aircraft guns, and when the plane was shattered the observer had sufficient presence of mind to leap from the machine and take his chances with the parachute. He landed safely.

The first ten days at Buxières saw many of the gaps filled in the regiment; for the first time since leaving Camp Hancock the outfit was given a full quota of officers; many of those with the Illinois and New York Guard Divisions, as well as those who had received commissions at Army Candidates' School at Langres, reported for duty and were assigned to line companies.

There were days in the Argonne fighting when a Sergeant commanded a company and a Second or First Lieutenant had charge of a battalion, and officers were being "expended," to use an army term, every minute; now, with the war over, we were getting the semblance of a regiment approaching real strength.

In addition, 131 non-commissioned officers were sent to the regiment and assigned to companies; men who had looked for promotion after the action at the front did not relish the idea of seeing new men deprive them of their chance of advancement, but after the first few days an adjustment was made that at least temporarily proved satisfactory.

A school, representative of all the organizations of the 28th Division, had been established in Buxières, with a thousand students; these men attended the school for six days and then another group, selected from the infantry regiments and engineers, took their place. In other words, it was a specialists' school. Lieut.-Colonel Joseph Thompson, of the 28th Division—the famous Joe Thompson, coach of the University of Pitt football team in days gone by—was placed in charge, with Captain Joseph P. Connell as Adjutant; and Company L, of the 112th Regiment, was given the big job of feeding those thousand men three times a day and looking after the billeting in the little town.

In addition, the Supply Company and Regimental Headquarters, and later the Headquarters Company, became residents of Buxières, and so 1500 or more sol-

diers were crowded into a French village which did not boast a third of that number in its palmiest days.

Training camp discipline, so different from that which is in force up the line, was tightening; the " red tape " of paper work was again in evidence, and minor deficiencies were magnified into inexcusable faults—to be remedied " at once and prompt report made to these Headquarters." That convinced us that the war was over. Men who were shy of equipment were " checked up," and so far as supplies permitted, were outfitted.

In addition, special details of men were selected from each company to attend gas, infantry, machine gun and specialist schools elsewhere in France, and day to day departed, via Woinville, en route to Toul and Langres and other centers.

But the most welcome news of all that came about this time, on Sunday, November 24th, was that concerning the lifting of the censorship restrictions which up until that time had smothered all attempts at giving location of units in France. Now it was permissible to tell where the regiment had been, where it was now stationed, and to speculate, in typical doughboy fashion, on where it might or might not be within the next two weeks or so. In other words, all the freedom in the world was given to the man who wanted to write " the folks " in what battles he had taken part, how many days the outfit was at Fismes, what the " hell of it " was like in the Argonne and how it felt to take part in a jump-off, as well as give the hour and date and location of the push.

The "Fathers' Christmas Letter" idea was given a big boost at this time, not only by *The Stars and Stripes*, official paper of the doughboys in France, but by memorandum from the Division Headquarters, encouraging all men to write dad a cheery Christmas letter, assuring that it would be delivered post haste, by special delivery, once it had reached the home town.

Then came Thanksgiving, with its sunshine of early morning and its downpour of late afternoon and the most miserable night in many days, with roads ankle-deep in mud. Men kept close to their billets and dreamed of days to come; thankful that the war was over.

BUXIÈRES, FRANCE, NOVEMBER 28, 1918.

The copy of *Life* that you sent me, among the other magazines which have come in the recent mail, has this remarkable poem:

These are the things our lads shall bring from France:
  A clearer sight; a knowledge strange and new
  Of human souls revealed to common view;
A spirit wakened by deliverance
From motives small and mean; a wider chance
  For those once held repressed and hampered through
  Outworn conditions; and fair dreams come true
For high hearts tried and proved by circumstance.
A miracle has touched our humdrum days
  With holiness; a flame that naught may quench
  Has quickened eager youth with strength that would
Spend endlessly in sacrificial days;
  And there shall rise from battlefield and trench
  A new race bred of love and brotherhood.

—[Charlotte Becker, in *Life*.

Truly, those are the things the boys will bring back—those fellows of the good old 112th who have been through the hellfire of it all, have seen its grim features, have felt war's wounds, have seen its sickening sights, who have trudged day in and out, with backs grown weary and packs so heavy that "the last long mile" seemed ten times as long as it really was.

For the boys who have been through shell and machine gun fire, who have lived in the gopher holes and dugouts and trenches of the line, who have endured rain, cold, hunger and hardships of battle, with rare fortitude —these are the boys who are coming back to the good old U. S. A.—God's country they call it now—not mere boys or striplings, but real men who have been through the crucible.

More than mere prose can tell, these lines in Charlotte Becker's poem describe the inner man of the doughboy who has fought his way to the front and bested the finest soldiers Germany could throw into the affray against him. Only boys who were patriotic to the core, whose patriotism they were willing to pay with the sacrifice of their own lives that a world might live, could catch the vision that the 112th has seen. The appreciation of life and its uncertainty, the full value of service to the fellow who slept in the trench with you, the brotherhood of man to man—it took a war up in the barbed wire confines of No Man's Land, in the pitiless weird glare of Véry lights and flares, of bursting shrapnel and machine gun bullets, to emphasize to the world for all time that

the fellows who braved such ordeals have seen something more than the humdrum of life.

Those days on the lines none of the boys will ever forget. What they have gone through is in itself a whole story, what they did for humanity's sake and for the honor of their regiment resolves itself into endless chapters; the fullest story will never be told, for each man's heart is a book of experiences; each soldier of the old outfit who has been through the hell of it saw it from a different angle; but each man, no matter whether he was a cook, kitchen police, runner, clerk, rifleman, grenadier, or automatic expert, was "THERE." Every last one of them was on the line when the big pushes were in progress, each doing his part, and the first impressions of the war game, brought into relief in all their horror and weird fascination during the push through Château-Thierry, grew in number as the campaigns progressed.

"A new race bred of brotherhood and love" is the one the people of western Pennsylvania will see when the 112th boys and the rest of the 28th Division come marching home some of these days. These war-made men of the battlefields of France, fellows with stripes showing wounds in action and months in service overseas—you'll see for yourselves they are different lads than the ones who marched away one memorable September 8, 1917, en route to a training camp at Augusta, Ga., on the first lap of this trip to France.

Though the war is over, they are still playing the game, training as hard as during those eight months in

Georgia, the experience of actual conflict proving an invaluable help. But even if they are still playing at the war game, they know and realize that it is only a question of marking time until the word comes that the ships for the 112th are ready, and that the whole 28th Division can plan with certainty on going back to the best land on earth. Hallowed thoughts of days on the line, visions of the Statue of Liberty, the last note from home—how precious all these things have been in the life of each soldier; how infinitely near to the Guardian of all the world has every doughboy felt at one time or another, and under shellfire they have all prayed the same prayer—that his part, no matter what the cost, might help swing the balance toward the victory now achieved.

Time can never erase some of the memories of the trenches and dugouts, of the woods and undergrowth through which our fellows went; they have left an indelible impression; and when each doughboy tells his story, he may omit some of the truths, but in his heart he knows each fact and figure, he knows the miles that were made in the Stygian darkness of nights in French woodlands; he knows how he plodded through the mud; and he knows, too, of the long nights without end in the front-line trench. And now with the dugout chapter closed and trenches giving way to farm lands in this section, even with December weather coming on, how thankful these fellows are—*your boys* in the 112th on this Thanksgiving Day.

God in His goodness has watched over the outfit, and though some have made the supreme sacrifice, others lie in hospitals, convalescing from wounds, the boys who are here in this little town of Buxières feel deeply thankful; they want the folks at home to know, too, how grateful they are for all that their loved ones have done. Life and all it holds for us has been made infinitely precious through participation in the world's greatest war.

BUXIÈRES, MEUSE, DECEMBER 1.

With three square meals a day, three blankets and a heavy winter overcoat to make a comfortable bed at night, and with waterprooof slickers, the doughboys are well taken care of from day to day, and so they now face a winter in France which holds none of the terrors of a winter in the front line.

It is no secret that the fellows who went through the heavy shellfire at Fismes and the Argonne and endured long nights of patrolling in the Woevre feared a damp, cold winter in the trenches more than the worst type of fire that the Huns could offer. And so, when Christmas comes, they will have cause to be thankful; just as they were thankful on Thanksgiving, even though the day was one of the most miserable.

There were the three square meals that day, as usual, but many a fellow dreamed of the fireside at home and wished he was sinking his teeth into turkey rather than sipping the soup and eating the boiled meat on the menu for the day. Then, too, the rain helped in the unpleasant-

ness, and the roads in Buxières and vicinity were ankle-deep with mud.

But doughboys can be happy under any circumstances, and around the fires and dim candlelight in the billets that night they celebrated in memory of victories won, and for hopes, cherished day to day, that not so many months may intervene, but that the early part of summer will see the good old outfit, every last man and officer of the 112th, safe and happy in his own home town.

During the early part of December the regiment gained a new recruit in the person of André Burard, a French orphan, sixteen years old. He became homeless during the latter part of 1914 when the German hordes swept down from the north over Château-Thierry. He and a little friend, both of them thirteen, were gathering wood some 800 yards from their home when they saw the Germans coming. There had been rumors that the Huns were on the way, but none of the French people thought they were so near. The father, fighting at the front, had been killed; his mother, subjected to the attacks of these creatures who knew no law of decency, was then murdered; his little brother was hanged and his sister, with her hands severed at the wrist, also dropped dead, while another brother was carried off into captivity.

André himself and the other boy ran to the protecting shelter of the French artillery positions, and when the Germans were driven back in a temporary gain by the

French, André then learned how the family had been wiped out—murdered and butchered.

From then on until he hopped aboard a returning leave train from La Bour Boul, climbing on at Dijon, he had been eating and sleeping with the Allied armies. For more than a year he had been with the French; for seven months he had been with the Americans; then between times he had worked in the glass factories at Dijon, making as much as 15 francs a day.

Making fast friends with the band boys, he cast his lot with them; he bunked, marched and ate with them, and, boylike, he wasn't long in learning American slang and American ways.

At reveille one morning, as the band marched into position and started playing the morning march, André trailed into the rear line, took his post and stood firm as any soldier.

"Who's the new man in the band?" inquired Captain Paul E. Ziegler, in all seriousness.

"That's André Burard, the little French orphan," one of the boys replied, and then André, stepping to the front, saluted with all the solemnity and soldierly bearing of many days spent in the army game.

André remained with the regiment until the word came in March of the new year that the 112th was to depart for the seacoast. Then he said good-bye, with a tell-tale lump in the throat, and started off to Dijon again.

With the 112th Infantry,
Buxières, December 9.

Facing the possibility of an early movement from this area, if present rumors mean anything, scores of doughboys plowed through mud and an intermittent drizzling rain Sunday afternoon to see Mont Sec—the tunneled wonder that the Germans were able to hold against repeated attacks until the Yanks swept everything before them in three victorious days last September. It is eastward three miles from here.

Mont Sec, rising out of the Woevre plain like an island in a great stretching ocean of brown, has more man-made passage-ways, concrete dugouts, machine gun nests, carefully concealed billets and houses underground than any single hill or district which the boys of the 112th have yet seen. At the foot of the great hill lies the devastated, ghastly looking town of Mont Sec. It was a town once upon a time; to-day there are few walls and only the church tower and its old clock remaining above ground; the rest is a shambles, a level heap of brick and plaster, with hundreds of shellholes made by H. E's to indicate something of the terrific bombardment to which both town and hill were subjected.

As the doughboy winds his way up the road, crosses the narrow-gauge railway with its American-run, Baldwin-made "dinkey" engines getting up steam at the "engine house," he finds to his right a long line of artillery positions, grass and ground covered, but having roofs of concrete two feet thick. Then there are ammu-

nition pits, concrete lined and roofed, and so arranged that they can be flooded or destroyed in a moment—but the Germans left so hurriedly that only a few are filled with water, while the others bear American signs of warning—"Danger, Keep Out."

Two hundred yards farther on, and the hill is reached. Concrete kitchens, long tunnels going underground, with bunks on either side of the passage-way; officers' quarters splendidly and comfortably arranged—in other words, a veritable hotel under ground, and practically safe from shellfire unless a big 6- or 8-inch was to make a direct hit. Be it said to the credit of Yankee gunners, there were a number of direct hits made, and if any Germans happened to be left at the time the shelling was going on, they are buried under the débris, and need no other grave.

The town of Mont Sec commands a splendid view of the sweeping Woevre plain, and lying at the foot of the little mountain itself, it was easily a good target for Allied gunners. The church tower, rising above the ruins like a great monument to a village that once was and sheltering the score of civilian graves behind one of its walls, is the most prominent feature of the little place.

All sides of the mountain are shell-pitted and tunnel-dug. Half way up alley-ways or tunnels, with board floors, walls and almost water-proof ceilings, lead 300 to 400 feet into the heart of it, and then tall ladders lead up the shafts to the machine gunners' seats. There are dozens of these tunnels, and an equal number of machine

gun nests, some of which have been hard hit by shellfire and aero bombs.

The whole mountain presents a veritable series of tunnels and for that reason reminds one of Mammoth Cave in Kentucky. How thoroughly the Germans did their work is seen in the stovepipes that act as airshafts; in the solid manner in which the bunk rooms and officers' quarters are constructed. Anti-aircraft gun emplacements, well concealed and yet commanding a sweeping view of the sky and horizon, are all about the hill, but the guns, of course, have long since gone. On the western slope are two thoroughfares, or officers' streets, where the headquarters was located, and in one rather elaborately built wooden building is said to be the room in which the Crown Prince stayed when he visited the front. It is trimmed in blue, and though devoid of its furnishing now, it needs no imagination to prove that the Germans who lived in the quarters there lived well.

Brick walls, duckboard steps and duck walks are all about the western side of the mountain; evidently, until the Americans came, it was not under such heavy shellfire, for the shell holes and bomb damage seem confined for the most part to the eastern face and the summit. From a rickety flagpole that still stands at the highest point the white flag flies—placed there, undoubtedly, by some of the first Yanks who swept through the district after the first dash in the St. Mihiel salient in September.

Many of the main passage-ways leading into Mont Sec are lined with stone, and above the entrance is a stone

arch, in the center of which is the German cross. Graves, buildings and archways, everything that the Hun built in the war zone, have been embellished with this iron cross. At the foot of the western slope three German graves, with substantial tombstones of German carvings, attract the passing doughboy; shells have knocked two of the stones over and another shell has swept a Prussian eagle from its feet and it lies sprawling and broken—as it does in Germany to-day—over the ground where our own boys rushed not many months ago.

Tunneled mountains, hidden machine gun nests, intricate passage-ways, concrete-protected artillery emplacements and the ever-present barbed wire; all these things, interesting and apparently formidable as they have been, could not stop the onrush of a mighty force, backed by and fighting with the morale of the American army.

So Mont Sec, once the terror of the French armies and the stronghold of the Crown Prince's picked Prussians, lies like a plaything and a muddy amusement park to-day—and the doughboys who are still playing the game in France are its visitors.

It was during the period of rest and training at Buxières, with the regiment being reorganized, with new officers being sent to it, with ranks filled with replacements and men from hospitals being returned to their own companies, that two new field officers were given a berth in the organization. They were Lieut.-Colonel Paul Tucker, formerly of the 35th Division, who took

up his duties as second in command on December 17th, and Major E. Hammond Johnson, a Southerner, formerly of the 82d Division, who arrived five days afterward and was assigned to the 3d Battalion. Both officers remained with the regiment until March 16th, when they were ordered to the Officers' Replacement Depot at Goussaincourt, after the 112th had said good-bye to the Buxières area and had been located along the Meuse near Traveron, Sauvigny and Pagny for two long months.

Christmas found the doughboys at Buxières, and the accounts written at that time convey the spirit of the day better than any narrative written months afterward. They can tell their own story:

With the 112th Infantry,
Buxières, December 25.

"Peace on earth, good will toward men" to-day reigned in the war zone for the first time in four years.

Out of the trenches and living in billets, American soldiers in the little towns in the Woevre region and more particularly in the Thiaucourt sector enjoyed this Christmas Day to the fullest.

The weather, the officers of the A. E. F., the Y. M. C. A. and the soldiers themselves played a prominent part in the program.

Christmas carols, played by the 112th Infantry Band during the early hours of Christmas morning, from midnight to 4 o'clock, brought the glad tidings to sleeping

doughboys, and added a little bit of heaven to a land so accustomed to the ravages of war.

At 3 in the afternoon, while no turkeys were obtainable, the soldiers in Buxières and vicinity surely enjoyed one of the most substantial repasts any crew of energetic cooks could produce, and to-night, in the little shell-battered school house 34 French kiddies who have lived in Buxières throughout the period of German occupation were made happy for the first time.

America played Santa Claus to France—and the weather man, seeming to realize that an unusual event was being staged, on Christmas eve placed a coverlet of snow on streets, roofs, hillsides and pine forests, and throughout Christmas Day snowflakes fell at intervals.

The menu which the Headquarters Company provided for its 300 men ran thus:

Baked 1400 honest-to-goodness doughnuts.

Steak, par excellence, with " beaucoup " gravy.

Bread, with all the jam you wanted.

Half-pickles. Malaga grapes.

Mashed potatoes.

Stewed tomatoes.

Coffee.

One large cake of chocolate, one package of cigarettes.

In addition, here is what the Y. M. C. A. gave each man:

Two cakes of chocolate and a pack of Camel cigarettes.

A cup of free cocoa.

And the mail man brought scores of Christmas boxes of the $9 \times 3 \times 4$ variety—making many doughboys' hearts glad, and there were scores of letters, too, mailed November 28th to December 2d in the States, which were delivered.

In short, it was a merry Christmas for the 112th.

The war has come and gone, the leading rôles have been played—and as the day went swiftly by, more than one doughboy said a silent prayer to the One who has guided the war game and helped bring victory and realization of hopes.

Three years ago Henry Ford set sail from America and arrived in Europe to get the boys out of the trenches by Christmas. To-day, by playing her own part vigorously and shoving the Huns beyond their own confines, American boys in France were able to enjoy the day in peace and quietude.

Wonderful day it was.

Services were held in all battalions by the three Chaplains with the regiment—Willis W. Hall, David G. Mann and Isaac L. Smith. In the evening a song service was held at the Y. M. C. A. shortly after the Christmas tree fête for the French kiddies. At every one of the many scheduled gatherings and exercises of the day, the demand for admittance was so great that many a happy youngster was content to remain outside, or else return to his billet to huddle about the stove and dream about the days to come at home.

No one who attended the entertainment at the shell-scarred little school house or who found his way up the dingy steps into a packed room will forget those 34 happy little children who were reveling in their first Christmas in four years. They were happy as kings.

Eyes beamed, cheeks were rosy and on every face there was a smile.

More than 1100 francs (a little more than $200), contributed by the soldiers of the Headquarters, Supply and L Companies in this little town, bought enough Christmas presents to make the Christmas tree fête a great success.

In other words, the A. E. F. played the rôle of Santa Claus most successfully to the "compatriots of Lafayette," as one little youngster, extending a greeting to the doughboys in his native language, expressed it.

A translation of the address read:

MESSIEURS LES AMERICAINS.

For four long years we have been subjected to the German rule. One glorious day we heard with joy that a great people, friends of Liberty and Justice, had come to deliver us. Thank you for the sacrifice you have made for us. In the name of my little comrades, I thank you, for giving us this beautiful celebration at Christmas time, and assure you that the memory will forever remain.

The little compatriots of Lafayette will never forget. They will hold the memory of your gifts always in their hearts.

J. SANTIGNON,
Mayor, Buxières.

Architectural sets, hats, capes, coats, toys, dolls, candy, handkerchiefs, and fully a score more useful ar-

ticles were on the list of presents for the kiddies. The 112th orchestra barely had room in one corner to play eight or nine typical American selections.

The local Y. M. C. A. secretary, assisted by Supply Sergeant Albright, of the Headquarters Company, surely overlooked nothing in a hurried trip to Nancy to secure the gifts; then, willing hands helped trim the big Christmas tree, which occupied the center of the large room, and then doughboys themselves lit the scores of candles and packed the room almost to suffocation—but the real spirit of giving to make happy was surely there.

A little French mademoiselle recited in French a greeting to the American soldiers.

John Surra sang,and won new honors;"Maj" Olmes' incomparable whirlwind orchestra and jazz band scored a distinct hit, and every feature of the short hour's entertainment emphasized the joyousness, the carefree attitude and the happiness of the day.

The old mayor of the little village and the whole council were there, French mothers and fathers also attended—in fact, it seemed as if everybody in the district was on hand or tried to elbow his way into the room, and everyone, from youngster to parent and doughboy to officer, caught the real spirit of the occasion.

BUXIÈRES, FRANCE, DECEMBER 26.

Out over the snow-covered hilltops I walked this afternoon. It was a trip of some six or seven miles,

through snow two to three inches deep. The curious fact was that down in the Woevre plain and through the villages of Buxières, Buxerulles and Heudicourt the snow had disappeared. It was on the hilltops and the plateau of the Meuse heights, however, in and around the old German ammunition dump and signal station, and throughout the territory covered by the narrow-gauge ammunition railway that Old Winter had played pranks with the scenery. The pine trees were wearing a heavy coat of white.

Even the abandoned German observation post in one of the tall trees, and the old German telephone lines, now cut to pieces in many places, were covered with snow. It was a landscape of white everywhere one looked—in other words it was winter upon the hilltop and fall in the valley and plain below. But the weather is generally cooler, the roads are improved because of that and so the hope is general that real winter weather may be on deck in earnest. Shellholes and funkholes are filled with water and ice; and a trip through the snow on the heights about Buxières is the best proof why the doughboys of the 112th are happy—glad that they are not wading through snow and mud in No Man's Land " up the line."

No Man's Land in this sector surely presented a desolate appearance. Chevaux-de-frise—or the iron barriers covered with barbed wire—added a touch of grim war to a scene that now is one of peace; and over at the old German ammunition dump, where piles of shells,

concrete, bombs and all the paraphernalia of a defeated army still lie, guarded only by the six or seven men on post, quietude reigns. It is surely "peace on earth" in the one-time war zone now. It is the first time, too, that we have seen for ourselves what the trenches, the barbed wire and No Man's Land itself look like in wintry garb. Surely the front line is not an inviting place under such conditions.

The great mocking red cross that lies on top of the hill just back of Buxières is still in place. It is German-made, constructed of red brick embedded in the earth, and then surrounded and set off, so that all aviators might see, by white crushed stone. This red cross was not made for the protection of the sick and wounded within that area; a hundred feet away, under the shelter of pine trees, is the big ammunition dump. Several hundred feet beyond that were the great gun positions, which swept the Woevre plain eastward in the direction of Mont Sec, or else to the west, toward St. Mihiel. And this mocking red cross still lies there—convicting by its own presence the purpose of the Huns who placed it in position, an enduring monument to their crimes and deceit.

During the trip over the hilltops and through the Woevre plain this afternoon I made a little side-trip over the plain to what had been the Buxières station, once on the broad, but now on the narrow-gauge line. The railroad ties indicate that the Germans replaced the broad-gauge with a narrow-gauge system, in order that

ammunition instead of passengers might be hustled to the artillery positions. German signs, which were prominent when the first Americans arrived here, are being fast removed, and so even in the woodland and isolated places about Buxières it is an unusual sight now even to see a painted arrow pointing to an " artillerie stellung."

With a week of half holidays in store, with winter weather on top and a liberal chance to explore the surrounding country at least for an area of four miles, there will be many doughboys who will be able to get a glimpse at the shell-wrecked towns in this vicinity.

The Y. M. C. A. did such a rushing business on Christmas and gave so much away that it is now closed for a period of two days, in order that it can stock up again. The Y. M. C. A. surely won a place in the hearts of the fellows at Buxières Christmas Day, while the K. of C. did similar service at the town south of here, Buxerulles.

So the Christmas season passed. The weather was so miserable at that time that a rigid training program would have been almost out of reach; drills were conducted during the morning only and frequently the roads and woods were so muddy that even these had to be called off during holiday week.

On New Year's eve Colonel Rickards published a greeting to the officers and men of the command, which read:

The Commanding Officer extends to his comrades of the 112th Infantry, regardless of rank, his sincere appreciation of their manifest efforts to maintain and still further raise the efficiency of our organization.

The past year has been no doubt the most eventful of our lives. While we regret the loss of many of our comrades, yet we rejoice that they died a true soldier's death. Many have been wounded and maimed, and these should be to us like the tender plant left to our care.

No effort, no self-denial on our part should be considered too great for us when the opportunity offers to extend to them the hand of loving charity and of loving comradeship.

That you have met the demands made upon your abilities, endurance and physical strength, with true spirit and uncomplaining fortitude, that you have deserved and received the commendation of higher commanders, is of great moment and a higher prize to me than the bestowal of higher rank and knighthood itself.

And so it is with sincere feelings of comradeship that I greet you on this New Year's morning with ardent faith in your loyalty and belief in your performance of duty as soldiers that must not only maintain the Regiment's high standard but raise it to still higher planes of soldierly efficiency, manly decorum and moral character.

I wish you and yours a most pleasant and happy New Year.

Such a message only went to emphasize anew the great bond between Commanding Officer and the man in the ranks. Coupled with the Christmas message he had written for those sorrowing ones at home, whose boys were not to return, it indicated that his heart was with his men at all times. If there was one thing for which a doughboy was grateful during those days in which the old year was dying and a new one being born, it was that Colonel Rickards still commanded the 112th Infantry.

With the 112th Infantry,
Buxières, France, January 1, 1919.

A new year started joyously to-day for the 112th Infantry.

It entered at midnight December 31st, and for fifteen minutes the lid was officially and actually declared off, and shots rang out from every hillside and billet and scores of flares were burned, and battle days harmlessly renewed for a quarter of an hour.

The band repeated its Christmas stunt, welcoming the New Year with a picked quartet of cornetists, and then, just after playing taps for the dying 1918, a few minutes later sounded reveille. So a new year, high with hope for an early return to the United States—the only wish the doughboys have now—started its history.

Down at the Supply Company office the officers were enjoying a typical New Year's eve feast, with music furnished by the 112th orchestra; card games and other celebrations were in progress in many enlisted men's billets, and some ardent writers were even penning letters to their sweethearts or their wives—or both—when the old year died and the new was born.

All around, 1919 got a joyous start, and to-day the sun smiled as never before—at least, it seemed that way, for to-day was fair all the way through, from sunrise to sunset. Then came more rumors of a possible return to the States even before April, the latest report being for a movement to get under way by February 15th—and whether this had any foundation or not, boys who have

but one aim in the army life, and that to get home, were greatly cheered.

Breakfast was at 9 and dinner at 3; mess sergeants who had gone to Nancy two days ago for the special purchase of extras for the New Year's feast did their best to take care of the " inner man " in splendid fashion.

Typical of the menus furnished by the various companies of the regiment was that of the Headquarters Company, consisting of steak, mashed potatoes, turnips, bread and butter, grapes, apple sauce and coffee. Each enlisted man was also issued a package of Nestor cigarettes and a large cake of Chocolate Menier.

The boys of some companies in the 3d Battalion fared even better; at the expense of mess funds, carefully saved, officers purchased turkey, duck and chicken, at truly absurd prices, that the New Year might be fittingly welcomed. In Company I, for instance, the boys had their pick of these three fowls—and turkey at 97 cents a pound and a liberal portion to each man! No wonder the new year was happily welcomed.

Proclaimed as a holiday throughout the entire regiment and bringing the half-holidays of Christmas week to a close, New Year's was surely well observed, and the men made the most of the vacation.

Recalling an honored army custom, all officers of the regiment paid their respect to the Commanding Officer, Colonel George C. Rickards, at Regimental Headquarters, between 10 and 12 in the forenoon. Ground pine and branches of pine trees were used in the simple but taste-

fully arranged decorations; over the entrance were the figures " 1919," and at each side were the colors, national and regimental, while a " snappy " color guard paced to and fro, and the officers entered, not only to shake hands and wish the Colonel a pleasant new year, but to listen to the splendid two-hour program which Major Olmes had arranged for the 112th orchestra. The orchestra surely did itself credit, gaining new words of appreciation in addition to those already said in its behalf.

Then, at 4 in the afternoon, the entire band boarded two waiting trucks, went to Heudicourt, where they played four selections for Major General William Hay, and were accorded a warm reception. One interesting feature was the dance, entirely impromptu, staged in the street by a doughboy who had evidently been celebrating with a little French wine. By far it was one of the cleverest vaudeville stunts and neatest bits of dancing the boys have seen, and he was roundly applauded. Then the band was whirled away in the same trucks to play a program lasting an hour and a half for the 1st and 3d Battalions, the concert being given in Company I's mess-house.

The boys of those battalions could hardly get enough of those favorites of the regiment which have helped keep the 112th's great old band right in the limelight on such occasions. " Robin Hood," " Hungarian Fantasie," " Remick's Hits," " American Red Cross," " Pick a Little Four-Leaf Clover " and nearly a dozen more brought one round of applause after another. There wasn't any

floor in the mess-house, and the band boys sat with their feet in mud, and with only dripping, flickering candles for light—yet they caught the spirit of the occasion, and like the night of the hard-luck trip to Jouy in the mud and the rain, played one of their best concerts.

Appropriate song services were held at the Y in the evening; then, Frank Hays, well-known Oil City man in the Y service, who has been at Woinville, three miles away, for the past month, resumed his work at the local association hut. The fact that Frank Hays is back with the 112th boys, and this on the first day of the new year, surely is occasion for real delight—so, taken altogether, it needs no second look to convince the casual reader that New Year's Day was a happy one for the doughboys in France.

The old year of 1918, with its eventful history, has dropped into the past, but as the days pass the memories of the fellows who fought side by side with us all the way grow more precious, and living up to the full spirit of Colonel Rickards' splendidly worded New Year's greeting to the men, they will play the army game well, in such a manner as to " raise it to still higher planes of soldierly efficiency, manly decorum and moral character."

And yet, as this New Year gets a start, there is but one hope in every doughboy's heart—" Get me back to the U. S. A. by spring, and I'll be satisfied."

CHAPTER XIX

FROM BUXIÈRES TO TRAVERON

A Four-Day March to Civilization—Two Months' Stay in Joan of Arc's Country, with Renewed Drill Program—Great Reviews by Lieut.-General Bullard and General Pershing—Box Car Ride to Embarkation Area.

Wild rumors of movement to the north, east and south, and the dreary days in the Buxières district, came to an end on the morning of January 6th, when the entire outfit, from the Machine Gun Company at Jouy to the battalions in the old German billets on the hillsides behind Buxières, hit the dirt road again. Heavy packs, full equipment and light hearts were the order of the day.

The weather man was the kindest individual of all. For days it had been raining, but this eventful Monday morning dawned clear with a fine sun rising high in the sky, and the start was made. It is a coincidence that throughout the whole four days of the hike the sun shone, and the first rain fell only when the destination of the main body, at Pagny la Blanche Côte, had been reached.

The average distance covered that first day amounted to 28 kilometers; it was a telling march, for men's feet had grown soft through the absence of any long marches during more than two months. The 2d Battalion reached Cornieville, and billeted in barns for the night. It had been in this same town that the Headquarters Company was dumped off in mid-October, after a long truck

MAIN STREET IN PAGNY LA BLANCHE CÔTE

Headquarters of the Second Battalion from January 9th to March 17th. The river Meuse flows by the foot of the street. The reader will not overlook the ever-present manure piles

VIEW OF SAUVIGNY AND MEUSE RIVER BRIDGE

The town of Sauvigny, headquarters of the Third Battalion and Supply Company, is only four miles north of Domremy, Joan of Arc's birthplace. This picture was taken in February, with the Meuse at flood stage

ride from Parois, southeast of the Argonne. Other units billeted in Boucq and Rangeval, where the 26th Division had made history fourteen months before.

The second day's march, covering only 14 kilometers, was far more pleasant. It felt like getting back to civilization then, for larger towns loomed up, real broad-gauge railroads were sighted and it was easy to be seen, though close to Toul, these towns had not been heavily shelled during the war. The Headquarters and Supply Companies, as well as all the 1st Battalion, congratulated themselves in reaching Foug, and the 2d Battalion at Lay St. Remy and the 3d at Laneuville were hardly less fortunate.

Yet it was the third day that proved the most eventful of the march, with another 18 kilometers lopped off. Vaucouleurs, 24 kilometers southwest of Toul and some 19 kilos from Commercy, was a busy place from 2 o'clock on, that afternoon of January 8th, as the troops arrived. Not only was it the largest town in which our troops had ever stopped overnight, but it was one of the most interesting, with its many cafés, restaurants, modern stores and historic appeal. Every street and many cafés, it seemed, bore some title that was associated with the life or birthplace of Joan of Arc. The main thoroughfare of the town is known as the Rue Jeanne d'Arc, and this, after making a turn and starting southward towards Joan's birthplace, becomes the Rue Domremy. The big weather-beaten stone chapel of the city pays homage to the Maid of Orleans, and there is a special altar in her

honor; and near the door is a collection box into which the visitor drops his coins, for the purpose of helping in the reconstruction of the chapel on the hill. For, as history goes, it was in Vaucouleurs that Joan of Arc (or Jeanne d'Arc, as she is known to the French) was outfitted as a warrior, given a mount and started off for the Court of Charles, at Chinon. This was in February, 1429, and the ruins of part of the old chapel in which she received the blessing still stand on the hill that overlooks the city.

Even the doughboy, hardened by days in the line, felt a certain indescribable sympathy for that daring little French girl, who, at the age of seventeen, with her hair cropped and with six men-in-arms as an escort, started out on the great mission of saving France. And in the days to follow, as the troops marched nearer to her birthplace at Domremy, now affectionately known as Domremy la Pucelle (meaning Domremy of the Maid), there was more than a mere historic influence that spanned the stretch of nearly 500 years.

In reaching Vaucouleurs we had covered 60 kilometers in three days' hiking, and the next day, with 14 kilos more added to the total, we had reached the end of the journey.

Within two days billeting conditions were adjusted, and the companies and battalions permanently assigned. In the Meuse valley, with the most northerly town of the area only ten kilos from Joan of Arc's birthplace, and Goussaincourt, the most southerly, but four kilos away,

we were surely in Joan of Arc's country. Regimental Headquarters was established at Traveron; the 2d Battalion was at Pagny la Blanche Côte; Companies A and B at Goussaincourt; Companies C and D at Burey la Côte; and the 3d Battalion and Supply Company in Sauvigny.

It was at the latter place that the Y. M. C. A. headquarters for the 112th area was established, with Frank Hays in charge, and during those listless days of waiting in the valley of the Meuse, he surely took splendid care of the men and made extra efforts to keep a large supply of literature, foodstuffs and tobacco, cigarettes and cigars on hand.

So from the early part of January until March 17th, Joan of Arc's country became the home of the 112th Regiment. The Machine Gun Company was billeted elsewhere in the Colombey les Belles district, Colombey at once becoming the Headquarters of the 28th Division.

Regular drills, modified during February to include activity during the forenoon only, with athletics as part of the afternoon program, at once became the feature of the life in this area. Training, in fact, was resumed January 13th and continued, interspersed with regimental parades, division maneuvers and brigade terrain exercises, until the word was passed for an evacuation and a getaway to Le Mans.

All that the boys talked about during those days was a start for home. Those first days in the area gave rise to all manner of rumors, and expectations ran high, among

officers as well as men, that the stay would be short. But as days lengthened into weeks and the program continued uninterrupted, it was realized that it was merely another period of " watchful waiting," and that the 28th Division must await its turn before counting definitely on a start for the seacoast.

One is not apt to forget the death of John Yorke, one of the 112th band boys, on January 16th. Taken sick but two days previous, he was hurried to a field hospital, where his illness was diagnosed as spinal meningitis; he lived but a short time, and on the 16th his comrades received news of his death at the hospital in the 28th's area —a shock that was felt not only in the band, where he was greatly liked, but in the companies throughout the regiment, where men had admired his sterling qualities. Coming as it did, the first death in the regimental band and being the only one sustained during overseas duty, it was felt keenly. As a result, the band was kept in quarantine, first in the big barn where the boys were billeted, and then in the portable barracks erected in Traveron, for a period of more than a month.

During those last days of January, the most welcome word of all arrived; a general extension of the furlough privilege, in which the doughboys had had but a small share up until that time. There had been three leave parties to Aix les Bains and two to Le Mont Doré, in central France, but the ambition of the man in the ranks was to go to Paris, Great Britain or to some leave area which he himself could select; the extension of the fur-

TRAVERON, LOCATION OF REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

A comparatively clean but isolated town of three houses and a dozen barns. The building on the right became a theatre in due time. Colonel Rickards' quarters were in the tower in front of which is a flagpole

THIRD BATTALION SOLDIERS IN SAUVIGNY

This photo, taken late in February, shows a number of Company M youngsters smiling for the cub war correspondent. A number of them resided in the barn just behind the man on the left

lough privilege made this possible for the soldier in good standing, and on January 26th five classes of leaves were announced to the men.

This new furlough privilege specifically stated that each man, irrespective of previous leaves, was entitled to spend three days in Paris—and as a result there came a veritable flood of applications, and a large number of the regiment had the splendid opportunity of seeing France's foremost city. Others took advantage of the regular leave parties during February and early in March; these went to Grenoble, Le Mont Doré and to Nice and the Riviera, magnificent trips which gave the doughboy who had seen nothing but manure piles and the interior of barns a real chance to see something worth while in France, and to take home a better impression of the country than would otherwise be possible.

Such leaves, too, gave him the opportunity of getting clean clothes, and, most of all, getting a bath. Many soldiers had gone through the war with fewer than a dozen baths, and most of these had been in streams or under circumstances where a thorough cleansing was impossible. A small bath house was fitted out at Sauvigny, but it was not adequate for the demands of the regiment; and supplemented by others later built at Pagny and Traveron, late in February, even they hardly answered the demand. So a furlough made possible a temporary ridding of the cooties and the feel of clean clothes—and nothing is more refreshing, more conducive to good disci-

pline and a brighter outlook on life in the army than such an opportunity to get clean.

Intensely cold weather and heavy snows during the first week in February put a kink in the customary drill program, and with the mercury down to zero and the snow so deep that trucks could not get through and traffic at a standstill, the doughboys found that it could be real winter in the valley of the Meuse as well as in the hills and broad valleys of Pennsylvania. The firing problem of February 8th had to be called off at the last minute because of these conditions, and the rising waters of the Meuse a few days later, when warm weather came, brought to a halt the terrain exercises which had been a semi-weekly feature.

Then, on February 12th, came that magnificent division review before the Commanding General of America's Second Army in France, Lieut.-General Robert L. Bullard. Shoulder-to-shoulder and in great unbroken ranks, the fighters of the Keystone Division swept across snow-covered fields at Barizey au Plain, a short distance west of Colombey.

It was the first review of the 28th Division that had been held since that grand finale at Camp Hancock late in April, 1918.

Lieut.-General Robert L. Bullard was so manifestly pleased at the showing of the Keystone boys that he dispatched without delay a note of commendation to Major General William H. Hay:

I have to-day reviewed your division. I congratulate you and it upon the fine showing that it has made in every way. Men, arms, animals, material—everything, was in fine shape. It speaks wonders for your discipline, that with nothing to expect after the armistice this division has kept itself in such fine spirits and such fine condition.

In other divisions that have already been reviewed by the Commander-in-Chief before starting home, you have something to beat. Do it!

The communication was signed by General Bullard himself, and immediately became a source of profound interest at headquarters—not alone for its congratulatory tone, but for the significant phrases, " reviewed by the Commander-in-Chief " and " before starting home."

Major-General Hay immediately published the announcement to all organizations, adding:

The Division Commander desires to express his appreciation of the splendid spirit which prevails throughout the division. It is this spirit that won for us to-day the appreciation of the Army Commander. It is believed that this division, before its return home, will have the honor of being reviewed by General Pershing. When this event takes places, which it is hoped will be soon, the Division Commander expects the 28th (Keystone) Division to carry out the closing injunction of the Army Commander, and to win also the commendation of the Commander-in-Chief.

The great review, beginning shortly after 10 o'clock, lasted until the early afternoon. Soldiers tramped through the cold of near-to-zero weather early in the morning and were up at 4.30 o'clock in many cases, so that the commands could be at the designated area in time. The 110th band furnished the field music for the

occasion, and under such weather conditions, had a difficult time in preventing their instruments from freezing.

It was 11.30 o'clock when the 56th Brigade, the senior infantry brigade of the division, took the field, with the 112th Infantry first in line, followed by the 111th. Colonel Rickards was senior infantry commander of the division. Then came the 55th Brigade, with the veterans of the 109th and 110th Infantry organizations. The great column passed in review in lines of masses. There was no cheering of veterans from " up the line," crunching their way over the beaten snow paths of the plain, fingers frost-bitten as they gripped the rifles, lines straight as a rule, with " eyes right " as the reviewing officers were passed.

While every man in the 28th Division wore his red Keystone, the insignia of the " fighting red " division, it was a far different group of men than those of training camp days who swept over sands at Camp Hancock in December, January and April a year ago. Nearly four thousand of those boys lie " somewhere in France," sleeping the last long sleep, and eleven thousand others are on the list of wounded, the majority of them back in the States. So the Keystone array was more like the Rainbow Division—with veterans from Pennsylvania, New York, the New England states, Mississippi and Louisiana, the Southwest, even California, Washington and Oregon. Husky fellows from Wisconsin, Illinois and Michigan were in line, too—it seemed more like the Army of America than the Pennsylvania Division.

Withal, they were sturdy specimens of the American soldier, tried under shellfire and proven all-steel. These were the fighters whom General Pershing is said to have called "iron men."

Despite the intensely cold weather, drifted roads and uncertain footing on the slippery field, the boys gave no evidence of these conditions as they followed regimental and national colors across the great plain.

That night there was considerable speculation as to the "going home" remarks in both General Bullard's congratulatory note and that of Major-General Hay. On the heels of discouraging rumors of the two weeks preceding the review, the Keystone boys felt there was something more tangible than a mere ray of hope for departure in the spring or summer. On Washington's Birthday, February 22d, the welcome announcement was made by the 28th Division Headquarters, following word from General Pershing, that the 28th Division had been picked to sail second on the list of homeward-bound divisions in May.

So hearts beat just a little faster, and hopes were all the brighter during those otherwise monotonous days in the Meuse valley. This announcement went far toward maintaining the splendid discipline that had prevailed so far, and which was indeed in danger of breaking had not some encouraging news been forthcoming.

Interest then switched to the splendid showing that the 28th Division's crack football team was making in the celebrated 0-0 contests, with the 79th, 5th and other

divisions. Games were played at Colombey, at Esch in Luxemburg, and on the big flying field at Toul. Freight car specials and truck trains carried enthusiastic rooters to these contests, each regiment being allowed so many officers and so many enlisted men on the sidelines. Had transportation facilities been available, there is little doubt but that a general holiday would have been declared and everyone who so desired permitted to attend the games.

The 28th Division team was never beaten, and the final game, which resulted in a scoreless tie with the 7th Division, was awarded to the Regular Army unit merely because it had gained 34 more yards than the 28th eleven. This decision permitted the 7th Division to enter the A. E. F. championship games in Paris; but it remains the belief to this day among loyal Keystoners that the 28th had the best team in the whole Second Army.

The biggest event of March, and in fact one of the most memorable occasions in France, was the review of the entire division by General John J. Pershing, Commander-in-Chief of the armies in France, which took place on practically the same field over which the troops had marched before General Bullard during the previous month.

This review, held under cloudy skies, was even more impressive. The four infantry regiments, the machine gun battalions and their transports participated. The review eclipsed in brilliance and impressiveness the finest of the division reviews at Camp Hancock.

Three score aeroplanes, flying in battle formation, then sideslipping in unison and doing the light fantastic, almost shared honors in point of interest with the steady stream of doughboys, steel helmeted and with dull-colored bayonets furnishing a cold rigid line, as the infantry outfits swept across the field.

For three days all that the division officers and men had talked about had been the review; plans, maps and order after order had filtered down from Division Headquarters until every man was fighting fit and inspired.

Those doughboys who took part will not soon forget it. Attired in their trench coats, carrying light packs, wearing their shiny steel helmets with the new red keystone, and carrying rifles with bayonets fixed—they formed the ideal picture of the American fighting man. Officers seldom have been prouder of their commands; and it was evident that General Pershing and his staff were immensely pleased.

Four hundred trucks, requisitioned from all army areas immediately adjacent to the Colombey les Belles district, had saved the soldiers a weary hike of 15 miles to the reviewing field, and so when the word was given to pass in review at 3 in the afternoon, they were in the pink of marching condition. All regimental bands were grouped in one; all Headquarters Companies were grouped into a special Headquarters Battalion, with Captain Paul E. Ziegler, 112th Infantry, commanding.

The 112th Infantry, in command of Colonel George C. Rickards, with Lieut.-Colonel Paul Tucker, second

in command, never appeared to better advantage as it swept across the wide field, platoon lines straight and the steel grayness of the day providing the ideal setting for the review of able-bodied fighting men. Now and then the sun would peep out from some cloud, sending a shaft of light across the field that would cause even the dull-colored bayonets to flash as wave after wave of men passed the reviewing stand.

The great long column of men and wagons was hastily given the once-over by Major-General William H. Hay, the Division Commander, who rode the line; then the order, "Pass in review," was called down the line, and the column moved—moved like some great being with furrowed ranks that had suddenly been given impetus. The review over, platoons took distance, and the Commander-in-Chief, accompanied by his staff, inspected each line—hastily of course—and the doughboys, standing at attention, felt sure that the General was merely affording each man an opportunity to get a glimpse of the great Commander-in-Chief.

On General Pershing's heels came members of his staff, American and British officers and finally a solitary field clerk, who checked the name of each unit as the General turned to give the next one in line the once-over.

Enlisted men who had won the Distinguished Service Cross for valorous action were decorated at the ceremony which immediately followed, the colors of the 111th Infantry being used. Sergeant James T. Powell, of Company C, 112th Infantry, the only man in the 112th to be

decorated, was not present, having been selected a few days before to attend the A. E. F. University at Beaune, and so the presentation of the D. S. C. to him was necessarily postponed until several weeks later.

Powell's citation read:

For extraordinary heroism in action near Fismette, France, August 9, 1918. When a platoon of his company was held up by sniper fire, Sergeant Powell, undaunted, voluntarily crawled through holes in walls and over roofs, located the enemy sniper and killed him, enabling the platoon to proceed without further loss. Later in the engagement when reinforcements and ammunition were needed, he volunteered and swam the Vesle River under machine gun fire.

Meanwhile, movie men and a half-dozen photographers with Graflex cameras were not idle. They snapped Pershing and his staff a dozen times—and then some more; every time he inspected a line of rigidly standing soldiers a camera would click—and the line of fighting men and the General became a part of some photographic record.

Overhead the aeroplanes continued to maneuver, now flying five in a group, now ten, then sideslipping, somersaulting and doing a score of stunts and keeping the doughboys interested every minute. Several machines swooped low—so low in fact that the few spectators scrambled to a safer spot, and even movie machines in the aeroplanes were seen to photograph the long stationary column.

So from the air, from the sidelines, and from all sides, the review by General Pershing of the 28th Division

became a pictorial as well as a human record. Officers and men will long remember the spectacular, most impressive features, as well as General Pershing's address to officers and non-coms, telling them that another six weeks or so would see them sailing home.

The General's prediction as to the sailing program, as events later proved, was a good guess at that time; in fact, as early as March 3d the word had gone throughout the regiment that in " two months we will be back in God's country "—a remark which some attributed to Colonel Rickards.

So while the boys read the *New York Herald* and the *Daily Mail* (Paris editions) each day, scanned the columns for some ray of light as to how the ships were speeding other doughboys home, the Y. M. C. A. and doughboy entertainers were doing their best in the evening to keep the men in fine fettle. Barns became theatres overnight; hay mows became reserved seats, and, in spite of the cool weather, a motion-picture show, traveling on a Ford truck, was always the signal for the entire doughboy population of the French village to turn out and pack the barn.

During the stay in the Meuse valley the 112th youngsters had the opportunity of enjoying some of the best of shows then traveling throughout the Toul area. One of the most enjoyed was that of the 28th Division Troupe, of which Granville Lane, Nathan Cohen, John Surra and Hugh King, of our own regiment, had become members. It is a part of the history of those armistice

days in France that the success of the 28th Division shows spread the fame of the Keystone outfit, and so when it took up its tour in Pennsylvania after days in France had been forgotten, it was accorded a warm reception.

Traveron, with a splendidly constructed barn, soon boasted the best opera house in the 112th area, and the story of the " first nighter " there is a classic. A score of officers, four hundred cheering doughboys and practically the entire French civilian population of Traveron saw the Headquarters Company show on the night of the opening. The weather was anything but agreeable, but that didn't matter; that first night was a great success.

A week before the Traveron Theatre had the reputation of being the biggest, coldest and most uncomfortable barn in the little town; then it became the most cheerful place in a circle of five miles. To be sure, the weather hadn't moderated much from the near-to-zero temperatures of several nights before, but the excitement of seeing a real first-class production in your " own home town " in France enabled one to forget that his feet were growing cold.

Early in the week the pioneer platoon had built the stage at one end of the barn; others, who knew something of the theatrical game, made the " flies " and " drops " and arranged the curtain. Even enough " juice " was obtained from the electric line into Traveron to furnish the electricity for two lamps. Some thirty candles made splendid footlights—and the performers did the rest.

Everything had been arranged at the last minute. Work on the stage was not completed until 4 o'clock Saturday afternoon; the volunteer actors had been rehearsing their own skits for two days only; but even lack of preparation had little to do with the success of the show. It was a whirlwind from the start. Officers enjoyed the fun as much as any doughboy; to the fellows in the little village of a dozen barns and three houses it seemed like getting back home—only there was no admission charged, and the big, fine-looking sign that Bill Harding, of Elk Lick, painted, designating the barn as " Theatre," really meant " Welcome—Walk Right In " to every doughboy who came along the broad highway.

Promptly at 7.30, following an overture by the 112th Infantry " jazz " orchestra, with Major Olmes as conductor, the " big show " was on and the first laughs got going.

" I want you to be easy with the fellows who put on this show," Captain Paul E. Ziegler, of the Headquarters Company, announced, " for they have not had much time to rehearse."

But his words were almost unnecessary, for every act was cheered—not jeered; and there were laughs where groans might have been had the production not measured up to standard. For a doughboy theatregoer is a harsh critic in his way, and the fact that every act went big on the opening night at the Traveron Theatre is the best evidence in the world that there was plenty of undiscovered talent in the company, and some of it

was clearly in evidence on the memorable night of February 1st.

The laughs started with the clever act by Lacey and Dorgan, Scotch and English comedians. When it comes to getting Scotch and English costumes for doughboys who carry all their personal possessions in the haversack on their back, it is some proposition—but there was the Scotch kilt that Lacey wore, and his legs, too, were just as bony-looking as any Highlander's. William Lacey hails from Harrisburg and Richard Dorgan, who made good as an Englishman, used to be a Bronx reporter for the *New York Sun,* morning edition. Lacey made a hit with his Scotch song, " I'm Absolutely Full," and Dorgan got the entire house to pipe in on the refrain, " We Want to Go Home." It was the first time, border vets say, that the song has been sung with the gusto that was manifested that night.

The musical four—George Johnston, guitar; Silvan Hilliard, mandolin; Major Olmes, violin, and Earl Steinbrook, flute—followed up with three timely selections that won applause. It was the first time that the quartet had appeared in public since the trying days at Dravegny.

Then act three was another laugh. " Schooldays " was a " go " from the time " Stix " Fidler, of Reading, stumbled onto the stage, until " Percival " Reynolds came in with a bouquet which he would like to have handed to his " dear teacher." Each of the five principals in the act, which was replete with new jokes and com-

pany hits, was at his best and they could not have been better. Those who took part were: Jonas A. Castle, playing " Spikey," the roughneck; Strayer Reynolds, in the rôle of Percival; George Fidler, of Reading, equally capable as an ambitious schoolboy as he is in the cook detail; Abe Greenstein, the incomparable schoolteacher; Fred Knell, of Pottsville, who didn't have any use for mollycoddles. Songs, jokes and the absence of slapstick comedy, which might have been expected, went far to make the act a success.

Ivor Griffith, of Mahanoy City, sang " The Sunshine of Your Smile " and " Joan of Arc," and received appreciative applause for each; George Bowman, of New York City, who used to tickle the ivories in one of the theatres of the metropolis, was " right there " when it came to popular ragtime and a new rendition of " The Old Gray Mare," this time on the piano. Bowman, too, played the piano accompaniment for all the song hits of the evening.

In the opinion of the doughboys, however, " Room 44, Hotel de Luxe," featuring Francis Maloney and James Beighley as the blackface warriors from the firing line, and Daniel Isles, of Waterford, as the ambitious hotel keeper, was the biggest hit of all. From the time the curtain went up until the two blackface fighters from No Man's Land had been scared out of the hotel, there was one howl after another. Soldiers, perched like pigeons on the brick wall far in the rear of the barn, laughed until it seemed they would tumble off, while the

200 or more youngsters in the big haystack forgot all about the rumors of moving or staying in France, as they watched Beighley and Maloney.

The clever touch of the comedian was evident even in their dress, and each wore a uniform that was a cross between an American outfit, German equipment and French apparel, and Maloney had enough service stripes and bars to have participated in all the battles of this and all the wars preceding it for the past hundred years.

Colonel Rickards, who was among those in " officers' row," apparently enjoyed the soldiers' production as well as any doughboy there. Captain Ziegler made the announcement of each act and was in charge of ceremonies; the 112th band played two selections, and the 112th orchestra, which furnished the overtures, was at its best. In spite of the bitter cold weather that greeted the first day of February, the boys forgot about cold feet and enjoyed the fun of the evening.

So it was that the Traveron Theatre, that barren barn of other days and once the home of the band until the portable barracks were erected, sprang into the limelight. Days afterward a number of other shows were staged there, all by visiting troupes, however, and the interest in the programs grew each week, until the time arrived when bookings were canceled and the word flashed from Division Headquarters that first units would entrain March 16th for the Le Mans area.

Then we knew that we were on our way to the coast at last; and so those little verses which had been written

during those quiet days in the listless valley of the Meuse, unchanging save for the rise and fall of the water and the diversified weather program, were to become part of the memories of " up the line " in France:

Traveron, old Traveron,
Barns, billets, Meuse and all,
With rolling fields and sloping farms—
To us these things appeal;
Short weeks ago we met you,
As packs from backs we threw;
But Traveron, old Traveron,
We're glad we've had the chance to say,
" Hello and howdy-do! "

Traveron, old Traveron,
Simplicity's your name;
On maps you may be quite ignored—
To us, it's in the game;
For war has brought the little towns,
Those shattered bits of France,
Into the record of our lives—
They're homes to us of other days,
The meeting's been by chance.

And when the time to say adieu
Draws near and we depart;
We'll think of all those unknown towns
And keep them close at heart;
Then from some old familiar shore,
We'll dream—and wander on,
Keep thinking of the war-time roads
That led to Traveron.

Aboard the box car specials—in which, thank goodness, American-built cars predominated—the regiment

"FEEDING UP" THE DOUGHBOYS AT MAXEY

Miss Pauline Brown, of New Rochelle, N. Y.; Frank W. Hays, of Oil City, Pa.; Miss Mary Wadden, of Madison, South Dakota, of the 112th Infantry's Y. M. C. A. Detachment, taking care of the Le Mans-bound soldiers just before leaving Maxey on St. Patrick's Day. Mr. Hays proved himself one of the best Y men the 112th ever had, and he had two splendid assistants

entrained on March 17th, 18th and 19th for the embarkation area. The Headquarters, Supply and Machine Gun Companies, as well as the Sanitary Detachment, got away late on the night of the 17th; the 1st Battalion and Regimental Headquarters left Maxey sur Vaise at 10.55 on the morning of the 18th. The Y. M. C. A. workers, despite the blustery morning and slight snowfall, handled the long lines with ease, giving each man a cup of hot chocolate and a package of cookies before the train pulled out.

The trip to Le Mans required two days of travel, and the schedule for our section read something like this:

March 18th—Left Maxey at 10.55 A.M.; Briçon, 3.50 P.M.; Bar sur Aube, 5.05 P.M. Stop for supper at 5.30.

March 19th—Bourges, 9.05 A.M.; Vierzon, 10.20 A.M.; Villefranche, 11.50 A.M.; Gièvres, 1.45 P.M.; St. Aignan, 4.00 P.M.; Montrichard, 4.30 P.M.

March 20th—Detraining point near Le Mans, arrived at 2.30 A.M.

Detraining, fed up with hot coffee and a sandwich by the Red Cross, we tramped through the mud to the tented area of the camp, and there unslung packs. This place, with its rain, mud, delousing processes and endless paper work, keeping men busy day and night, was to remain our home until April 15th.

The tents and the sand reminded us somewhat of Camp Hancock. Nights were cold and the days intensely warm. Even a light snow fell one Sunday morning and the water in pails was frozen; four hours after-

ward it was so warm that enlisted men could hardly wear their blouses.

Drills were maintained in the embarkation camp just as they were at Traveron and elsewhere in the valley of the Meuse; discipline was even more strict, for the camp officials had full sway, and one misstep meant a hold-up, so rumor had it, for the entire outfit. So everyone "played safe." Though the quaint little city of Le Mans was less than five miles away, there were but three days when passes were given to enlisted men, and that was the occasion of inter-division athletic events and special contests.

Affairs were being straightened around and the enlisted man was being made to feel more at home in the rush and hurry of a camp that reminded one of a great factory, when General Pershing's commendation of the 28th Division, expressing his delight at the review of several weeks previous, was made public. More than anything else of those first days at Le Mans it put the men in good spirits.

That letter, as published to all units, read:

American Expeditionary Forces,
Office of the Commander-in-Chief,
Chaumont, March 21, 1919.

Major General William H. Hay,
Commanding 28th Division,
American E. F., France.

My dear General Hay:

It gives me a great deal of pleasure to congratulate you and through you the officers and men of your division on the splendid

showing made at the inspection and review on March 10th at Colombey-les-Belles. The appearance and equipment of the troops and also the condition of the animal transport of your division are to be highly commended. To me this is an indication of that same high morale in your command which it possessed while in the fighting line.

Arriving in the spring of 1918 for training with the British, the period of instruction of the 28th Division was cut short, and by the middle of July it was thrown into the active battle to take part in the successful Champagne-Marne offensive. For nearly two weeks the infantry brigades operated under French and other divisional commanders, taking part in the Aisne-Marne offensive as reserve of the 3d Division, which was fighting its way north from the river. On the 28th, however, the division was regrouped under its own commander and from that time fought as a unit.

The 55th Brigade went into the line, relieving the 39th French Division in front of Cierges and the Bois de Grimpettes, where after two days' severe fighting the Ourcq River was crossed, and the town of Cierges was entered. On the night of August 6th, the division returned to the battle in the Fismes sector along the southern bank of the Vesle River. From this time until its relief on the night of September 7th by a French division, it was continuously engaged in small local fights, in the course of which the river west of Fismes was crossed and the town of Fismette was occupied. After a short period for resting and refitting, it entered the great Meuse-Argonne offensive as the center division of the First Corps. It attacked on the morning of the 26th and, until relieved on the night of October 8th, was in continuous action, advancing ten and one-half kilometers against strong enemy resistance and capturing among other towns those of Varennes and Apremont. On October 16th it was again placed in the line—this time in the Toul sector near Thiaucourt. From this position it attacked on November 10th and was advancing when hostilities were suspended.

In view of this record, the officers and men of the 28th Division may proudly carry home with them the gratitude of the Allies with

whom they fought and the pride of their fellows throughout our forces. I want them to know of my own appreciation of the part they have played in the victories which are to the credit of American arms.

Sincerely yours, JOHN J. PERSHING.

Ten days later, while preparations went forward to get the division's paper work into such condition that it could be O. K.'d and the word given for units to move to the seacoast and embark for home, General Bullard addressed a splendid letter to the Commanding General of the 28th Division, calling the Keystone outfit " an A-1 shock division." It read:

HEADQUARTERS SECOND ARMY,
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES,
OFFICE OF COMMANDING GENERAL.

TOUL, FRANCE, 2 APRIL, 1919.

FROM: Commanding General, Second Army.
TO: Commanding General, 28th Division.
SUBJECT: Operations of 28th Division.

1. Upon the departure of the 28th Division from the Second Army for return to the United States, I desire to express my sincere appreciation of the work of this division while under my command. This division has served in all of the larger major operations of the final year of this war, such as:

CHAMPAGNE-MARNE Defensive (15 July–18 July).
AISNE-MARNE Offensive (23 July–31 July).
FISMES Sector (7 August–17 August).
OISE-AISNE (18 August–8 September).
MEUSE-ARGONNE (26 September–9 October).
THIAUCOURT Sector (16 October–11 November).

2. On July 15 this division assisted in stopping the great German drive south of the Marne and in the Aisne-Marne Offensive, operating under French and American Corps, pushed forward to the

Vesle River, where at Fismes it held a sector for more than a month of continuous fighting. During this time the 28th Division was operating under my command in the Third Corps and under my direction this division established and held two bridgeheads across the Vesle River. During this continuous fighting at the Vesle, and the subsequent advance towards the Aisne, this division bore the brunt of the fighting, for it was in front of this division that the enemy was making his strongest resistance. After being relieved from the Vesle on September 8, this division moved into the Argonne Forest and with only a few days' rest, went into the great Meuse-Argonne battle, which resulted in the signing of the Armistice. The work of this division in this offensive is too well known for me to recount at length, but such names as VARENNES, ARGONNE FOREST, APREMONT, CHÂTEL CHÉHERY and MONTBLAINVILLE are written in history after the name of the 28th Division. After serving in this great offensive for thirteen days, this division was relieved and sent to the then quiet Thiaucourt Sector for rest, but, although the division was tired and worn out, its indomitable spirit arose and the Thiaucourt Sector was changed from a quiet sector into an active one.

3. During the many operations in which this division was engaged, many prisoners, both officers and men, and much material were captured. From the signing of the Armistice, during a period of trying waiting, the 28th Division's interest has not flagged; its appearance, condition and state of military preparedness has steadily improved and upon them the Commander-in-Chief has congratulated the division. The fighting spirit of the 28th Division is shown by its casualty list which is fourth among the divisions of the American Expeditionary Forces. This division has always been a combat division in every sense of the word, and in my belief should be classed as an A-1 Shock Division. I desire to extend my most sincere congratulations to the officers and men of this division, which has in its operations exemplified the fighting spirit of the American troops. I again extend to you all my most sincere congratulations and best wishes.

(Signed) R. L. BULLARD,
Lieutenant General, U. S. A.

So with fighting days all but a memory; with work rapidly progressing toward the final jump-off, and with but one thought uppermost, of getting overseas and getting a glimpse of the American shore line once more, it seemed mighty good to know that such officers as General Pershing and the Commanding General of the Second Army thought well of the 28th.

To us, the living, it seemed that all our hardships were worth while; and in those days, when we seemed midway between the life of up the line and the coming happiness of being home again, we thought solemnly now and then of the buddies who still were sleeping and who wouldn't cross with us this time.

CHAPTER XX

THE BAND'S RÔLE IN THE WAR

Playing Stretcher-Bearer During Shellfire—Days About Fismes—Sharing Burdens of the Hike With Other Doughboys—Winning Gold Medal for Playing at Le Mans and Getting Monte Carlo Trip in 28th Division Contest.

From acting as stretcher-bearers during the first "hellfire" days at Fismes to winning a gold medal for playing better than nine other division bands, and then awarded a trip to the Riviera and Monte Carlo because it proved itself to be the best band in the 28th Division, may seem a long stretch of history for any musical organization. But for the 112th Infantry band, rated as one of the finest doughboy musical organizations in the A. E. F., it was all in the day's work.

All along the trail, from the home station at Oil City to the training days at Hancock, from the British training area to those days with the French; into the Argonne and out, their musical fame had spread. At Fismes and in that vicinity they put aside their instruments and rendered valuable service as stretcher-bearers. And so it is believed that no history of the 112th Regiment would be complete without some story of what Roy Miller's musicians accomplished overseas.

From the day it led the way to the Oil City station, playing "The Old Gray Mare" for the first stage of the trip to Camp Hancock, until as on many another occa-

sion, it was playing " The Star-Spangled Banner " with the last guns being fired November 11th, the band was " right there " with the doughboys.

When dreary days of routine threatened to create an atmosphere of homesickness, when the hikes became " draggy," when doughboy " pep " was at low ebb, it was the band that put new cheer into the fellows who were making history around Château-Thierry, Fismes or elsewhere.

Not only did they let the people of France know that they could play, as was evidenced by their concerts at Tremblay, the march through Montfirmail and the treats at Louvres and La Trétoire, but in the first days around Fismes every last one of the band boys proved his mettle as a stretcher-bearer under fire. There wasn't a man who shirked. With German 6-inchers whistling around, with roadways being pocketed by one barrage after another, it was the band boys who were lending a hand and carrying the wounded back to a dressing station.

It was on the *Aquitania,* princess among ocean-going vessels, that the 112th band was accorded new honors and made an enviable reputation for itself. Hardly had the big vessel cleared port than the band was giving an afternoon and often a morning concert for the benefit of more than 6000 doughboys aboard. At night, when the officers gathered in the palatial smoking room of the *Aquitania,* it was the 112th band which was there to furnish the music. Night after night the boys played.

A special program was arranged for the evening of

May 11, when a number of vaudeville acts were introduced; the band, as on many other occasions, proved its value then. The night before landing at Liverpool it gave this splendid program, copies of which are now being treasured by those who were members of the outfit:

March—" Happy Go Lucky."
Overture—" William Tell."
Badinage—Victor Herbert.
Waltz—" The Passing of Salome."
Vocal solo—" We're Going Over," by John Surra.
Selection—" The Fortune Teller."
Dance of the Hours (La Gioconda).
Descriptive—" A Vision of Salome."
March—" Stars and Stripes Forever."

Then, when at 4 o'clock the following afternoon the Headquarters Company led the way from the ship through the streets of Liverpool, despite heavy packs and extra equipment, the band boys, playing the miracle game again, swung into " The Wallabies " with more enthusiasm than ever before, playing away with such spirit that every man who marched could feel his hair tingle; then, as the crowds cheered, as factory employees by the score hurried into the street, " The Old Gray Mare," time-honored but never time-worn, sounded the keynote of victory, and the column turned into the railroad yards, there to halt and board the compartment coaches for a whirlwind trip across England. It had been " The Old Gray Mare " that sounded the farewell to Camp Hancock; now it was saying hello to old England.

It might be well at this time to give the names of the musicians who were in the organization when it left Oil City, and who, with the exception of Roy Johnston, drummer, discharged at Camp Hancock and replaced by Charles H. Kopp, of Tremont, Pa., and Mail Orderlies Brakeman and Small, constituted the overseas 112th band.

Band Leader, Roy M. Miller, Lake, Ohio, clarinet.

Assistant Band Leader, Ralph A. Van Wye, Niles, Ohio, clarinet.

Sergeant Bugler, Harry L. McKelvey, Fredonia, N. Y., cornet.

First Duty Sergeant, George R. Johnston, Reynoldsville, Pa., trombone.

Band Sergeant, Frederick W. Thorn, Oil City, Pa., bass.

Band Sergeant, John R. Johnston, of Reynoldsville, bass.

Band Corporal, James G. Beighley, Oil City, Pa., trombone.

Band Corporal, Milam E. T. Jordan, Cleveland, Ohio, cornet.

Band Corporal, Leonard Rumburd, Oil City, Pa., trombone.

Musician 1st Class, Harland C. Mitchell, Knox, Pa., drums.

Musician 1st Class, Francis B. Maloney, Du Bois, Pa., cornet.

Musician 2d Class, Russell R. Buckham, Oil City, clarinet.

Musician 2d Class, George H. Winger, Oil City, Pa., clarinet.

Musician 2d Class, John W. Surra, Bradford, Pa., flute.

Musician 2d Class, Granville B. Lane, Oil City, Pa., horn.

Musician 2d Class, William R. Trembath, Cleveland, O., baritone.

Musician 3d Class, Warren W. Brakeman, Oil City, trombone.

Musician 3d Class, Rush W. Felt, Franklin, clarinet.

Musician 3d Class, Clarence A. Hall, Oil City, clarinet.

Musician 3d Class, William E. Harding, Elk Lick, Pa., drums.

Musician 3d Class, Coulter H. Hoffman, Rocky Grove, Franklin, trombone.

Musician 3d Class, Daniel J. Isles, Waterford, N. Y., cornet.

Musician 3d Class, Leroy E. Johnston, Oil City, drums.

Musician 3d Class, George Victor Kohlman, Oil City, cornet.

Musician 3d Class, Frank E. Lane, Oil City, horn.

Musician 3d Class, James M. Mitchell, Reynoldsville, cornet.
Musician 3d Class, Claude R. Moore, Oil City, cornet.
Musician 3d Class, Donald Major Olmes, Oil City, horn.
Musician 3d Class, Chester A. Small, Oil City, cornet.
Musician 3d Class, John R. Yorke, Oil City, clarinet.

Then came the first training days with the British; special concerts for the American and Allied officers, evening concerts in the little villages of Seninghem, Bayenghem and elsewhere—concerts that brought back memories of playing and training days at Camp Hancock.

On the long three-day hike the band boys, heading the column, proved real heroes; not only did they carry their heavy packs, but their instruments as well, and when they got to Wavrans they pitched tents and slept beside the fellows who were to go over the top in the days yet to come.

Days with the French at Tremblay and near Paris, about Louvres and then at La Trétoire and Bussières, south of the Marne, were repetitions of the old-time slogan that the band is the gloom-killer in a regiment of doughboys. From playing reveille and retreat, to giving evening concerts and fulfilling engagements not on the regular program, the 112th band surely made an enviable impression.

The first hospital engagement in France—in fact, the first concert of any kind after crossing the Channel—was given on May 18th at the Calais Hospital, where a large number of Canadian and British soldiers, fresh

from the Armentières and Hazebrouck sector, were recuperating. Two nights before, enemy aircraft had bombed the place, and the band boys evidenced more than ordinary curiosity in inspecting the shell holes and the damage that had been done.

After the record march from Bussières to Fays Farm early on the morning of July 4th, when it was thought the Germans were getting ready to cross the Marne, instruments were turned in; and until early in October the band said good-bye to practice days.

From that time on they were simply doughboys, trudging along with their packs, sharing in discomforts, sensations and experiences of all other men in the Headquarters Company; in fact, they had been doing that all along. Then came the fly-by-night moves south of the Marne, days at Chamblon, Charly-sur-Marne and through Château-Thierry. When the regiment went into position on the slopes south of Chéry Chartreuve and the battalions moved into place for the crossing of the Vesle at Fismes, on August 7th, the entire band was taken forward—stretchers gave place to band instruments of other days; and the fellows proved real heroes under fire.

Through machine gun bullets, 6-inch shells and trench mortars with which the Huns contrived to devastate the ranks, the band boys got through it all, carrying their wounded in safety to the nearest dressing station. At all times during August 7th, 8th and 9th, they were under heavy shellfire, the remarkable feature is that not one was killed or wounded.

It remained for Francis Maloney, in celebration of the end of the war on November 11th, to get slightly wounded in the forehead when the exploding cap of a shell let go hardly an hour after the last gun was fired.

Then, when the regiment was sent into the Fismes district for a second time, during the period from August 18th to September 7th, members of the band served as runners, again playing their part under shellfire. Even Chief Musician Roy Miller, who knew more about music and how to teach it than all the other band leaders in France, the boys declare, served as telephone orderly.

It was while serving in such a capacity that Roy Miller wrote that battle march with a real swing to it, "Dravegny," later to be christened as "The Heroes of Fismes."

The relief from the Vesle sector having been effected and the march to the Bois de Boursault, southwest of Épernay, completed, orders came to increase the strength of the band to 50 men; so every opportunity was then given to the musicians of the regiment—those not yet members of the band—to try out for a place in the organization. As a result, there were new names in addition to those already given, and among these were:

Musicians 3d Class: Weston W. Ashenfelter, Harrisburg; Nathan L. Cohen, Philadelphia; Silvan Hilliard, Oil City; William Kruger, Oklahoma; Harry L. Lukehart, Punxsutawney; Ray A. McCartney, Huntingdon; R. H. Pifer, Du Bois; Theodore Pottorf, Du Bois; E. M. Roberts, Bradford; Melvin Shaffer, Boiling

Springs; Francis M. Whitaker, Mahanoy City, Pa.; James H. Wilson, Huntingdon; Robert Dickenson, Richmond, Ill., and Reed Detar, Oil City.

The few days the regiment was encamped in the district east of Vitry-le-François, with the band at Maurupt, hopes rose then that the coveted instruments would soon arrive and days of practice be resumed, but before the wagon train could catch up the entire outfit was on the long trek north, 32 kilos the first night, September 16th–17th, to the woods north of Laheycourt; then, before anybody could get a good rest after being thirteen hours on a steady march, word came for an additional march the night of the 17th–18th, into Bellefontaine. Of the enlarged band, only eight men straggled into Bellefontaine, the little town on the edge of the Argonne, at 4.30 in the morning. Permission was received for the band to remain in the town one night, and so it was not until twenty-four hours later, after individual visits to stores and homes of the town for food, that the fighting musicians were on their way up through the Argonne Forest itself.

Meanwhile, during these strenuous days, orders from G. H. Q. had made it plain that musicians' lives were not to be endangered by stretcher-bearing duty at the front—and so practice days began in earnest in the shacks near Croix Pierre, some five miles north of Les Islettes, in the heart of the big woods. It was here, on September 26th, while the guns roared and the infantry went over the top and kept on chasing the Hun, that the band played at

practice as never before—playing Miller's " Heroes of Fismes " with more vigor than ever, and putting real pep into " Stars and Stripes Forever."

Then one regiment of the 91st Division (colored) moved in, occupying billets near the band boys, and the thirty-six-hour stay of the colored brethren proved one round of amusement after another. The story of how they lost their packs in the pitch darkness of the Argonne night, and then tried to exchange them, in order to get the right one, never grows old.

The colored lads turned in when it grew dark—and it is dark in the forest before 5 o'clock. Shortly after, word was passed to roll packs; then when it was so dark nobody could see and after they had nearly fallen asleep outside the few sheds in which they were housed, sergeants passed the order: " Unroll packs, take any one and go to bed." So each colored fellow took any pack he could get and turned in for a second time.

At 3 in the morning, when the night was as black as every one of the soldiers and man could not see man, the order to move came. They didn't feel like rolling the other fellow's pack in the dark and so they tried to exchange them.

" Ah's got a pack with two dirty socks, underclothes, a comb and a razor; whar's mine? " shouted one fellow; and another cried out, " Jus' a blanket hyar, with a towel, dirty socks, corned beef——" and so it went. Several of the band fellows were on gas guard, and they had plenty of fun.

The darkies lit candles, too, to help things; much against the rules of the game up there, where no lights were permitted at night. Half of the candles were ordered put out; and after they had been dimmed, it was only a few minutes until they were going full blast again! Luckily no Hun aeroplanes came peeking around.

"What outfit is this, soldier?" another one asked.

"This is the 28th Division," one band boy replied.

"What regiment, though?"

"The 112th—that's ours. I suppose you are here to relieve us."

"Ah don't mean that—what outfit is that right yar?"

"Oh, this is the band," was the answer.

"Man, that's what Ah want to relieve—ah want to relieve this yar band."

The days of life in the Argonne came to a close on October 9, with the 82d Division taking over the 28th's sector; then came the truck ride to the Commercy district, a few days' stop at Vignot, a concert at Mobile Hospital 39 (where the first American nurses were seen by the band fellows), and then the days of being in the Thiaucourt sector—with life behind the lines resumed at Pannes, so far as the band fellows were concerned.

The city hall of the town of Pannes then became a center of rehearsal every morning for Roy Miller's growing musical organization; and the days at Pannes, with chances to patronize the Red Cross, Y. M. C. A., K. of C. and Salvation Army, were among the most pleasant of any up the line. Playing the music world's best in the

morning, they cleaned up the streets and manure piles of the town in the afternoon.

The band was stationed at Pannes when the word came that the firing would cease at 11 o'clock the morning of November 11—and, as has already been stated, it was completing a concert with "The Star-Spangled Banner" when the last gun was fired. Maloney entered into the celebration that followed with full spirit, and an exploding cap of a shell, thrown into a bonfire, hit him above the eye, inflicting a wound that, while slight, was sufficient to send him to the dressing station and later to the field hospital.

On the night of November 12th the orchestra section of the band filled an engagement in the Toul opera house, playing for a vaudeville show given by the aero corps. The trip was made in trucks, and, for the first time in many months, the fellows had a look at a comparatively large French city.

"It was so long since we had been in a real town," one of the boys said, "that we acted like a lot of hicks from the country, and monopolized the sidewalks and everything else in sight."

Orders came a few days later for Chief Musician Roy Miller, Assistant Band Leader Ralph Van Wye and Musician Harland Mitchell to report to the A. E. F. band school at Chaumont; two weeks later word came through official channels that the last two had been permanently assigned to Pershing's band.

Roy Miller returned to the band at Traveron, and

when promotions were made Milam Jordan was made Assistant Band Leader. " Rip " Van Wye and "Mitch" never returned, and enjoyed the distinction of playing with Pershing's band during the official entry of the Allies into Metz, at the Peace Conference in Paris and in touring America in the interests of the Victory Loan.

During the days at Buxières and Traveron the band gave a splendid account of itself, always willing to help out at Y. M. C. A. or hospital activities, and frequently going by trucks in the rain to give a concert in some area. It was during the stay at Traveron that the band entered into the contest with other organizations of the division and won the Monte Carlo trip. But it remained for Le Mans to produce the announcement of the winning band.

Here the 112th band went into the contest with other musical organizations—nine in all—from other divisions. For three days the boys played, rendering concerts, jazzing at athletic events and in other ways competing with the bands of the 77th, 35th and 28th Divisions, as well as that of the Le Mans area. There were several bands from the 77th (New York) Division there, and the 307th Infantry Band soon acquired some renown as one of the best drilled bands, in point of maneuvering on the field, that officers and men had ever seen. Then there was the crack band of the 53d Artillery Brigade and the Le Mans area had its own band on hand. All were in the competition.

Friday afternoon, March 28th, the 112th band did its bit. It played Ackley's " Cedar Point," the splendid

REGIMENTAL BAND ON HIKE NEAR TRAVERON

This "motion picture" was not posed for, hence the blurry appearance. Roy Miller (at the left) has his boys out for a brief march this particular Saturday morning. The tall fellow with the big horn is Claude R. Moore

FAMOUS 112TH ORCHESTRA POSES FOR LAST TIME

This was the best orchestra in the A. E. F., to the 112th youngsters' way of thinking. Those in the picture are: Reading left to right: Front row: Edward W. Baumann, Earl S. Steinbrook, George Winger, Russell R. Buckham, James G. Beighley, and Frank B. Lane; Rear row: John R. Johnston, Coulter Hoffman, Daniel J. Istes, D. Major Olmes, leader; William E. Harding, Silvan F. Hilliard. Robert A. Dickenson was busy washing his mess-kit when the picture was taken

march that has hustled many a doughboy out of the covers on many a cold morning; its lilting swing captivated the judges just as much as it had the men of the outfit in days gone by. Following this with " The Barber of Seville " and " The Vision of Salome," the band had completed only half of its original program when a young Lieutenant, foremost of the judges, rushed up and announced: " Boys, that's enough; you needn't play any more."

There were some in the band who thought that the judges had decided the organization was not playing up to standard and might as well stop, knowing full well, however, that they were giving one of the best concerts of their lives. A few hours later the news spread throughout Le Mans that a 28th Division band had carried off the honors—more particularly, that the 112th Infantry band was the one to get the gold medal.

So in the " Yankee Division " hut in the public square of the city of Le Mans on Sunday evening, March 30th, Major-General G. W. Read, in command of the Le Mans forwarding camp area, made the presentation address, with Charles R. Mott, international president of the Y. M. C. A., and Miss Margaret Wilson, daughter of the President of the United States, also assisting in the splendid program.

General Read congratulated the 112th band boys on their splendid work, adding that they had proved themselves the best musical organization of the nine competing bands. He complimented especially the band leader and his assistant, and then each bandsman " passed in

review," grasping General Read by the hand immediately following the presentation of the gold medal. The trophy itself, twice the size of a 20-dollar gold piece, is engraved on one side, " Republique Française," with the head of France in bas-relief. On the reverse is a palm, encircling the space in which will be carved the data regarding the presentation.

The 77th Division may have carried off many honors in the athletic contests, in which the 28th Division had few entries, but the whole Keystone outfit was happier than in a long while, knowing that it had a band which could play its way to fame.

Just before the band boys left for Monte Carlo, the following commendation from Colonel Rickards was read to the organization:

I wish to express my thanks and the appreciation of the entire membership of the regiment for the honor and distinguished service rendered by your organization.

During our actions in battle, you have rendered most valuable and humane services by tenderly caring for the wounded, acting as stretcher-bearers and performing first-aid assistance to those unable to help themselves. No doubt many lives of comrades were saved by your timely and fearless action. Performing this duty, you were subject to the same dangers as were those in the fighting line; but, unlike them, you were unarmed and practically defenseless. Yet you performed your duty to humanity with a disregard for your personal safety under the same elements of destruction.

On the march your music has been as a beacon to the weary-footed soldier. In the camp or billet you have gladdened and raised the spirit of your comrades, and who shall say that your sweet music has not brought back to many a despondent one the awakening of better thoughts and a stronger determination, not only in the charac-

teristics of the soldier, but in cleaner, stronger manhood and citizenship.

Your attainment in winning first honors so far above all competitors in the recent band contest of the Le Mans sector, in which nine bands, selected from other divisional units, competed, is most fitting as an illustration of your worth as a musical organization—an honor that gives pleasure to all in the regiment and who are justly proud of you.

I wish to express my thanks for the additional honors you have brought to the regiment, and to assure you of my high personal regard for you as an organization, and individually as soldiers and gentlemen in whom I have the fullest confidence.

After several days' delay, the entire band was off for Monte Carlo, baggage in a special box car and the party traveling on a regular passenger train, in charge of First Lieut. John G. Wiestling, of the Headquarters Company. The delight of those forty-two boys who had won the gold medal at Le Mans and who had been awarded the trip to the Riviera for proving itself the best of the 28th Division bands hardly knew any bounds, and the "jerkwater express" that took them to the Mediterranean in four days was excused under the circumstances.

A list of the musicians who were participating in the trip and who had a big share in winning both prizes, included:

Band Leader Roy M. Miller, Assistant Band Leader Milam E. T. Jordan, Sergeant Bugler Francis B. Maloney.

Band Sergeants George R. Johnston, Fred W. Thorn, Frank B. Lane and John R. Johnston.

Band Corporals James C. Beighley, Leonard R. Rumburd,

James M. Mitchell, George V. Kohlman, Daniel J. Isles and Russell R. Buckham.

First Class Musicians Coulter H. Hoffman, George H. Winger and D. Major Olmes.

Second Class Musicians Robert A. Dickenson, Nathan Lightner, Reed L. Detar, Clarence A. Hall, Rush W. Felt, Charles H. Kopp. William E. Harding, Claude R. Moore, Weston W. Ashenfelter.

Third Class Musicians Warren W. Brakeman, Silvan F. Hilliard, William E. Krueger, Harry L. Lukehart, Ray A. McCartney, Robert H. Pifer, Theodore E. Pottorf, Charles B. Reynolds, Edward M. Roberts, Melvin E. Shaffer, Earl E. Steinbrook, Francis M. Whitaker, James H. White, Amos C. Wessler, Edward W. Baumann, Fletcher E. Mingus and Joseph L. Balbach.

Musicians Granville B. Lane, John W. Surra and Nathan L. Cohen, members of the band, but playing in the 28th Division Troupe orchestra at the time, did not participate in the contest, but had they been there, it is a foregone conclusion they would have done as splendidly as the others, contributing their full share toward winning the honors.

The 112th band finally reached Monte Carlo, but when it got there the baggage car had gone astray. Not only were they without instruments, but all their personal belongings, battle-field souvenirs, and extra music were missing. Two days at the magnificent city, living like kings; then came the word that the division was ready to leave Le Mans. Within record time they were on their way back.

It is a part of the history of the last days in France that the 112th band's property was not returned to them before it sailed. Many days afterward, when they reached the United States, there was a report current that it had been located, but so far no one has seen anything

of the missing instruments or baggage on this side of the pond; and that, in the minds of the doughboy musicians who lost all they had, is what counts most. The value of the property lost ran close to $8000, and many of the souvenirs were considered priceless. But losing baggage was part of the war game " over there."

Barracks bags that were " parked " at Calais showed up again in some few instances, but all of value that many of them contained had disappeared " somewhere in France."

No doughboy of the regiment will ever forget the band nor any of those old favorites, " The Red Cross March," " The Old Gray Mare," " Cedar Point " and a half dozen others. In all the hikes, in all the soldiers' pleasures and pastimes, the band had a prominent part; it helped furnish the cheer and the life on many an occasion, and it contributed a big share toward keeping the men in fine fettle for the great moment preceding the jump-off. The 112th band surely shared the Great Adventure in France, and though it lost none in killed or wounded, it was exposed to the same dangers from shell-fire, and bravely stood ready to do its part. The loss of John Yorke at Traveron was the only death in the organization.

Few tributes to any organization can be more eloquent of the spirit of appreciation than the four verses Harold Willard Gleason wrote of "The Windjammers," and which appeared in *The Stars and Stripes:*

They sing the praise of infantry
Which messes up the Huns;
And also of artillery
That works the bloomin' guns;
The engineers and cavalry
And aviators, too;
All get their share of glory—
And they earn it, very true;
But there's one branch of the service
They never think to praise,
Though deservin' it by Pershing,
In a hundred different ways.

It's the windjammers, the windjammers,
The regimental bands;
And it's many men are thanking God
For some bass drummer's hands.
For they help to carry wounded
When the bearers ain't about;
When you get yours in No Man's Land
The windjams pull you out.

They're a scraggy looking outfit
Of all sizes, sorts and shapes,
And their mouths are mostly puckered
Like they're eating sour grapes;
But they cheer us to the trenches,
Through shrapnel, mud and rain;
And when our bit is over
Sure they play us back again.

Oh, the windjammers, the windjammers,
The regimental bands;
You can see the shoulders straighten
As we pass the blowhards' stands;
They may not snipe the Fritzies
And they may not cross the top;
But when the cheer stuff's needed
They keep playin' till they drop.

CHAPTER XXI

WHEN PHILADELPHIA PROVED ITS BROTHERLY LOVE

Last Days at Le Mans and St. Nazaire—Bidding Good-Bye to France and the Cooties—Uneventful Voyage of the *Pocahontas* and *Mercury*—Quaker City's Great Ovation, April 30th—Muster Out Days at Camp Dix in May.

MEMORIES of the days at Le Mans are centered mostly on the three visits to the delousing plant, which meant death to all cooties that had accompanied the troops from up the line; and to the turning in of surplus equipment and a careful check on just what the man who belongs to an infantry organization should possess.

Both these details required much time and paper work, and there were few who found things very easy. Even the buck private, who is usually exempt from any interest in such matters, was called upon to help; and those who weren't had the sometimes unpleasant assignment of parading in blue denims and performing details in one section of the camp or another.

As into every other location where the 112th youngsters had gone since the signing of the armistice, the expectation was that the stay at Le Mans would be very short. Then one program after another appeared, and as March closed and April dawned, it seemed that the stay in the embarkation area would exceed in length any expectations.

During these days, with the certainty that it could

be no more than a month before a start was made for the seacoast, army officers outside the division and the camp officials made every effort to enlist men for special work as mechanics, clerks or military police. Early in April two guard companies, known as 130 and 131, were recruited for the purpose of looking after American supplies in Antwerp, Belgium. After having waited for weeks to approach the seacoast, the ordinary doughboy would have thought such an inducement would fall on deaf ears, and yet several score non-commissioned officers and privates from the rank and file of the regiment cast their lot with the newly organized guard companies, the allurement of duty in such a city as Antwerp undoubtedly proving too strong to resist.

Officers who volunteered for the same work were Lieutenants William B. Murray, Carl C. Tinstman, Edwin A. Madden and Clarence A. Bentz. The entire contingent said *au revoir* to their buddies on April 3d, and started for Belgium.

In a heavy rain, making impossible any inspection on the field, the complete equipment of each soldier was rigidly inspected by camp officials on April 10th. This final check was all that was necessary, outside of the official approval of sailing lists and paper work, to assure the early departure of the regiment for one of the seaports. In fact, it was reported on good authority then that within another week the 112th would be in St. Nazaire—a prediction that was borne out.

Officiating for the last time as Commanding General of the 28th Division, Major-General William H. Hay, on April 11th, at one of the most impressive field ceremonies held in France, decorated the colors of the 109th, 110th, 111th and 112th Infantries; 107th, 108th, 109th Machine Gun Battalions; 107th, 108th and 109th Field Artillery Regiments; 103d Engineers and 103d Field Signal Battalion. The formation took place on the broad sandy field near the four wooden buildings housing Division Headquarters.

The scene was most impressive as the regimental and battalion colors came upon the field, followed by seven squads of helmeted doughboys—picked men who had seen the hardest of the service up the line, men wounded in action for the most part and those unwounded who had taken part in the greatest number of front-line engagements. The 112th's provisional company was commanded by Colonel Rickards; assisted by Captain Roy R. Kriechbaum and First Lieutenant Ben E. Turner, both of whom wore two wound stripes.

The decoration of the colors was only part of the extensive program, a number of Distinguished Service Crosses, Croix de Guerre and one Belgian Cross being awarded. The ribbons attached to the new flags were in lieu of the silver bands to be awarded later by the War Department; these ribbons were inscribed, for the most part, with the names of the following engagements:

Champagne-Marne defensive (15 July–18 July).
Aisne-Marne offensive (23 July–31 July).
Fismes Sector (7 August–17 August).
Oise-Aisne (18 August–8 September).
Meuse-Argonne (26 September–9 October).
Thiaucourt Sector (16 October–11 November).

It is the belief of officers of the 112th Infantry that it was entitled to the inscription of "Château-Thierry (4 July–15 July)" on its colors, and the matter was later referred to General Pershing in a special letter. It will be recalled that heavy casualties were sustained in action during the fighting about Hill 204 and along the south bank of the Marne. One other regiment, operating in the same sector, was awarded the Château-Thierry ribbon, and for that reason it is believed to have been an oversight on the part of division officers that the same honor was not accorded the 112th, deserving as it was of the same battle credit.

Relative to the battle of Château-Thierry, it may be stated that the 7th Machine Gun Battalion of the 3d Division was the only American organization that ever fought within the city itself; American Marines fought at Belleau Woods, to the northwest.

Marshal Pétain says of the battalion:

The 7th Machine Gun Battalion barred to the enemy the passage of the Marne. In the course of violent combat, particularly on May 31st and June 1st, it disputed foot by foot with the Germans the northern outskirts of Château-Thierry, and covered itself with incomparable glory, thanks to its valor and to its skill, costing the enemy sanguinary losses.

COMPANY "C" FALLS IN FOR MESS

Picture snapped while the box car special, en route to Le Mans, stopped at noon on the second day of travel. Note the difference between the French box cars and the American-built one at the extreme left. American box cars rode like Pullmans in comparison

SEEING FRANCE FROM A SIDE-DOOR PULLMAN

There are sight-seeing advantages, though few comforts, in such a box car trip as that from Maxey sur Vaise to Le Mans. Company D's office staff and the regimental headquarters personnel were "shot" in this photo

It was this battalion that was being decorated as the 112th marched into the Grande Fôret on the afternoon of that memorable 4th of July, 1918.

The getaway from the Le Mans area came on April 15th and 16th. First trains, carrying the Headquarters, Supply and Machine Gun Companies, the 1st and 2d Battalions, and the Sanitary Detachment, left the Le Mans embarkation area siding in a downpour of rain. Men stood for several hours in one shower after another, clothes and packs soaked, and then were hustled into box cars, 52 men to an American-built car. Conditions were so crowded that only 45 men could find places or lie or squat on the floor and seven men in each car had to stand for the whole period of the trip, from Le Mans to St. Nazaire.

But there was some satisfaction that every time the speeding box car special lopped off a kilometer, it meant that much nearer home for the doughboys on board. On the 16th the remainder of the regiment left for St. Nazaire, traveling over the same route to the seacoast.

Detraining at 3 in the morning, the soldiers on the first train marched with full equipment three miles up the beach highway and into the camp area, turning into Camp No. 2 for a rapid-fire physical examination. Later in the day these same units were transferred to what is known as the Isolation Camp, and donned blue denim overalls, to protect their army-issued O. D. uniform, for the remainder of their stay.

There was very little sleep for the weary those last days in France; just as at Le Mans, there was something on the program every hour; final check-overs were made on the sailing lists, and hardly before the man in the ranks could make a fair survey of the camp and learn where the welfare buildings were located, word came to move—that welcome word for which men had been waiting ever since the armistice was signed.

All units of the regiment, excepting the 1st Battalion, were assigned to the *Pocahontas,* and marched from camp early on the morning of April 19th, in order to board the vessel at 9.30. The 1st Battalion was given space on the *Mercury,* which was scheduled to sail before sunrise on Easter Sunday, April 20th. The *Mercury* carried Division Headquarters and General Charles Muir, who had returned to the 28th Division the day following the flag and D. S. C. ceremony at Le Mans. He had come from the Army of Occupation in order to return with the division he had piloted overseas and into action, from the Marne to the Vesle and into the Argonne.

So while the departure from France came with a rush, it came quietly and without any great show. As the *Pocahontas* slipped out of St. Nazaire shortly after 5.30 on the evening of the 19th, there was an enthusiastic cheer from the men who packed the decks and lined the rail to those other Americans and French civilians along the shore; but that was the only exuberance of the occasion.

The movement from Le Mans to a place on board

ship in St. Nazaire harbor had been almost too rapid for the men in the ranks to comprehend; while the average doughboy knew he was starting for home at last, his feelings were so mixed that they can't be described. He donned his blue denim overalls again, made himself easy on the deck or hung over the rail and dreamily looked out to sea; watched the ship drop its pilot and then late in the evening drop anchor outside the harbor.

Easter Sunday, dawning as one of the most beautiful days at sea, found the men in good spirits. Though conditions were crowded aboard ship, " everything went " and was generously overlooked in the " hurry up—get us home " program. Blue denims and hobnails were the Easter fashion decree for doughboys; Sam Browne belts and shiny shoes, with dress O. D. uniforms were prescribed for officers; and a few days later, in accordance with standing G. H. Q. orders, the Sam Browne belt, hero of days in France, disappeared for all time into officers' locker trunks, not even to be dragged forth upon reaching the old U. S. A.

There were boat drills the first few days at sea; but outside of these, plenty of " bunk fatigue," and one barrage after another, put over by the Y. M. C. A., K. of C. and the Red Cross, there was nothing to report. The eleven-day trip overseas had only one disagreeable day, and on that particular occasion, with the ship pitching, but not rolling, many a youngster lost his appetite—n'everything.

But the weather man couldn't have behaved better,

and the ocean never seemed so calm as on the last days at sea. On the morning of April 29th a wireless message received aboard ship announced that the vessel would dock on the morrow at Philadelphia instead of at New York; announcement that the regiment would be held for a division parade, however, did not find any growing enthusiasm. For doughboys who had tramped all over France wanted to get home without any more hikes if it were at all possible. A lighthouse near Cape May was sighted and a great cheer went up from every youngster aboard ship as the vessel dropped anchor off the American coast that night.

In the ward room, where the officers were having an entertainment, Colonel Rickards rose to his feet and exclaimed, with a smile overspreading his face, "That shout means that we have sighted a lighthouse and are nearing God's green country at last."

That day the regiment's Commander had received a letter from Captain John Downes, in command of the *Pocahontas,* which indicated that the splendid conduct of the 112th boys aboard ship had not been overlooked. The note read:

I take great pleasure in informing you that it is the unanimous opinion of myself and officers of this vessel that the troops on board and under your command are the best organization which we have had the pleasure of bringing back from France since the signing of the Armistice.

Their behavior has been without a flaw, their spirit has been of the highest and the sanitary condition of the troop holds, washrooms,

TROOPS OF SECOND BATTALION BOARDING *POCAHONTAS*

On the afternoon of Saturday, April 19th, anniversary of the Battle of Lexington, and a famous day in history for the homeward-bound 112th soldiers. Note the heavy packs, with extra blanket slung over top. And that day was warm, too!

FOUR DAYS OUT AT SEA—AND "ALL'S WELL"

The *Pocahontas* was a little vessel, but in spite of crowded conditions the man in the ranks had a good time. Lounging on the deck in blue denim overalls, as portrayed in the picture, was the principal pastime

lavatories and decks has been such as to bring nothing but "excellent" reports from those of the ship's officers having these localities under their immediate charge.

I congratulate you, Sir, in having such a splendid body of officers and men to command.

So it seemed, that wherever the 112th went, the soldiers, splendidly disciplined and not forgetting that they were gentlemen, made an enviable impression that reflected credit upon the organization.

The morning of the 30th of April found both the *Pocahontas* and the *Mercury* moving up Delaware Bay and into the river, and as the expanse of water narrowed, permitting a closer view of Delaware and New Jersey shores, doughboys crowded the rails and reveled in American scenes again. Factories, railroad trains, homes, farms and all life seemed to possess a new appeal now.

From the moment that the *Pocahontas* passed Wilmington at noon until it crossed the imaginary dividing line between Delaware and Pennsylvania, there was a howling, whistling, cheering demonstration from the shore and from all craft on the big broad stream. A small fishing boat, anchored near the Pennsylvania line, was the first to give the greeting.

Then, at 2.20, with the *Pocahontas* passing Chester, and the *Mercury* following a mile behind, the whistles of the city's factories let loose. Submarine Chaser 71 came alongside and cut the water like a knife, tooting and adding to the welcoming din at the same time. Enthusiasm seemed to know no bounds; the 112th was having the

honor of being the first Pennsylvania troops to land at Philadelphia, the 111th having debarked at Hoboken a day or two before.

Then more submarine chasers came into view, and swung into line. At Marcus Hook the *Samuel Pennypacker,* with a battery of press photographers, swung out into midstream and came up along the port side of the transport. Needless to add, the photographers were on the job from the moment they got within firing distance, and the doughboys who thronged all upper parts and decks of the ship like so many flies looked on at first almost in silence; then when the press men " let fire" the men retaliated with a barrage of cheers. Then the whole stage was set for the welcome.

Passing the Texas Oil Company's big plant at 12.50 with a naval seaplane doing the light fantastic in midair and jumping all over the ether above the *Pocahontas,* there was another long lusty whistling welcome. Hundreds lined the shore and school children could be seen running here, there and everywhere. But it remained for the trim-looking *Samuel H. Ashbridge,* with its " folks from home " aboard, to prove the opening wedge into the doughboys' hearts. That was at 1.10. Up to that time the man in the ranks hadn't seen any use of cheering to a pronounced extent; he was too glad to be in home waters to give vent to his feelings.

Now and then a tell-tale lump bobbed up in the throat, convincing evidence of his joy over being back in the green country over here.

It wasn't long until relatives from central, southern and southeastern Pennsylvania, on board the *Ashbridge,* had obtained a broadside view of the boys aboard the transport, but it was a more difficult proposition for them to pick out the friends they had on board—or more particularly their own boys. For the average man in khaki it was a far easier task to pick out his loved ones aboard the *Ashbridge,* if indeed they were on the ship.

The story of how the *Ashbridge* with its band and cheering relatives accompanied the *Pocahontas* all the way up-stream, past Hog Island shipyards and the League Island navy yard, and stood by while the leading transport was pushed into place at Pier 71 has already been told by metropolitan reporters many days ago. But the story of how the doughboy from France felt as he looked on such enthusiasm and at times did not know whether to cheer because he felt so happy over getting into a real American port amid real American people once again—well, it's hard to explain, that's all.

More than one youngster thought of the buddies who weren't coming back; thought of the fellows on silent guard in the Vesle River region and in the Argonne. There were those who felt the plans for a parade would postpone their departure for home for two or three weeks at least; there were some who looked on the tens of thousands along shore and recognized no particular friend, yet knowing at one and the same time that each cheering mother or father or somebody's sister was his friend at that moment.

The *Pocahontas* docked at 3 o'clock at the Snyder Avenue pier and the first men ashore were casual officers, followed by a detachment of 109th Machine Gun Battalion men. The first 112th representatives ashore were a half dozen officers, followed by Company F. Movies recorded the docking and other incidents of the moment. Then came the heavy food barrage that put the men in fine fettle.

The Red Cross gave each man a piece of home-made cake and a big brick of ice cream; the Salvation Army distributed free message blanks in order that the wires that night might send the word home: " I'm back in the old U. S. A." Before it really seemed that two or three hours had slipped by, packs were unslung in real American day coaches and the second stage of the eventful journey " at home " was begun—with the K. of C., Jewish Welfare Society and the Y. M. C. A. seemingly competing with one another to put over chocolate and cigarette barrages aboard the troop train, bound for Camp Dix.

A year to the day since the departure from Hancock for Upton, via North Philadelphia, the 112th boys went over the same route. Hundreds of women and children, young men and old, cheered and waved flags; and the welcome outdid in a hundred ways those cheers that sped the boys to France. West Philadelphia, North Philadelphia and even New Jersey towns kept up the celebration of welcome as long as there was daylight. Trains sped by at short intervals.

HOMEFOLKS ABOARD PHILADELPHIA'S WELCOME SHIP

The *Samuel W. Ashbridge* played an important rôle the day that the 112th transports steamed up the Delaware. The "folks from home" cheered, the band played, and the doughboys went them one better. Note the battleships at League Island Navy Yard, in the background

FIRST 112TH MEN TO TOUCH AMERICAN SOIL

Boys of a Second Battalion unit were the first 112th youngsters to set foot on the Snyder Avenue Pier. Trains were waiting on the track alongside the ship, to speed the soldiers to Camp Dix

At 8.30 o'clock Dix was reached and at 9.15 many of the 112th doughboys were in barracks, arranging straw ticks on iron cots, and facing as good a night's sleep as any Brigadier-General ever had in France. The doughboys' cheers, late in getting under way during the day, were late in subsiding; and May 1st arrived before some of the lustier ones had " sounded off " and wrapped up in the blankets, to crawl out at 7 the next morning and face the best breakfast in days.

" Some welcome—some camp; but we want to go home toot sweet,"—that, and a little bit more, described the feelings of the average youngster as he thought over the events of that great day. "It seems worth while to have gone to France to receive such a reception as we got," added another, and still more exclaimed, " Oh, boy!" then tumbled off and went to sleep.

Colonel Rickards, sensing at once that the boys did not want to remain in camp until May 15th for the purpose of a parade in Philadelphia, so told General Muir on the afternoon of May 1st. That settled it. An agreement was reached that the 111th should be sent from Camp Dix to Camp Sherman for muster-out, parading in Pittsburgh en route; and that the 112th, because only 45 per cent. of its strength came from Pennsylvania, and this, mostly in the central and northwestern part of the state, should be mustered out at Camp Dix without further delay. That news spread in a few minutes, and the 112th youngsters were overjoyed.

The following day the last great review of the 112th

Infantry took place on the spacious drill grounds, and hundreds of visitors looked on. Sunday, May 4th, saw the final delousing process put in force, and by nightfall the first units had ceased to be members of the 112th Infantry and were attached to a camp casualty organization in the area near the Dix Theatre. Hour after hour during the two days following men went through the mill—at the delousing plant and at the discharge bureau; and on the afternoon of May 6th, with that honored paper tucked away in their pocket and tickets purchased for home, the first doughboys of the old 112th Infantry, now civilians despite their uniform, were hurrying to Philadelphia aboard trains or automobiles, on the first lap of the trip home. They were as proud of their red discharge chevron as they were of their two gold service stripes.

Men of the old 16th, because of location, were the first of the 112th to be discharged; following them came the 8th, and then those who came from other states were sent in turn to the demobilization camp nearest their home for final discharge.

Back to their home town these fighters from up the line hurried, as fast as trains could take them, there to receive the warm greeting that a loving homefolk had arranged in their honor. As trains sped through Pennsylvania cities, men and women cheered and the doughboys waved their hands in response, or merely smiled.

So the Great Adventure came to an end.

Here, amid the sunshine of a land they had grown

THE LAST GRAND REVIEW AT CAMP DIX, MAY 2, 1919

Colonel Rickards sees his men, steel-helmeted, erect and fighting fit, march for the last time as the 112th Infantry. One cannot describe the mingled emotions on such an occasion as this

to love the more during that year in France; here, with those who could speak their own language and appreciate their desires; in a land where the squalor and the pitifulness of the battle-field might be forgotten—these youngsters of the other days were supremely happy.

The greatest story of all, that feeling of relief and satisfaction to be home again, though it may not be part of the Great Adventure and many have overlooked it in recalling those trying times of up the line, is by far the happiest climax in a doughboy's existence.

"Are you glad to get home? And how did you like France?"

These were the queries the youngsters had to confront. But the doughboy just smiled, and said:

"It seems mighty good to be here."

And "here" he will stay until the battle call comes again, until the rallying cry of the old 112th resounds, and somebody cries out, in doughboy fashion:

"Let's go!"

PART IV.

ADDITIONAL CITATIONS

COMMENDATIONS FOR STOPPING GERMANS AT THE MARNE AND IN DEFEATING THEM IN THE ARGONNE

VI Army, P.C., the 26 July, 1918.
Hq., 3rd Bureau.
No. 2,283/3

Note

The President of the Republic during a visit that he had made to the VI Army has expressed his satisfaction on the results obtained as well as for the qualities of bravery and endurance that have been shown by all the units of the Army.

The General commanding the VI Army is pleased to transmit to the troops of his army the felicitations of the President of the Republic.

(Signed): General Degoutte.

VI Army, P.C., the 26 July, 1918.
Hq., 3rd Bureau.
No. 2,284/3

Note

The General commanding the VI Army desires to bring to the attention of the troops of the Army the following resolution passed by the Mayors of the arrondissement of Meaux at a meeting held 20th of July, 1918:

The Mayors of the arrondissement of Meaux at a meeting on July 20, 1918, are pleased to welcome the great victory of the VI Army that has saved their communes from the invasion that was menacing them at the time of the battle of the Marne.

They desire to convey to the valiant troops of the VI Army a sincere expression of their gratitude and their admiration.

Le President du Congress des Maires

(Signed): G. HUGEL,

Maire de MEAUX, Depute de SEINE-&-MARNE.

The General Commanding the VI Army is pleased to transmit these felicitations to the troops of his army.

(Signed): GENERAL DEGOUTTE.

VI Army Q. G., 23D JULY, 1918.

38th Army Corps.
No. 7628/P

GENERAL ORDER No. 348

General Degoutte, commanding the VI Army, asks the General commanding the 38th Army Corps to congratulate, on his behalf, the Franco-American troops of the 38th Army Corps, on the result of the recent days of fighting.

The General commanding the VI Army at the same time conveys the great satisfaction of General Pétain, Commander-in-Chief of the Armies of the North and North-East, of General Foch, Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies, and of Mr. Clemenceau, President of the Council, Minister of War.

DE MONDESIR,

General Commanding 38th Army Corps.

X Armé — Au Q. G. A., 30 July, 1918.
État-Major
3rd Bureau
No. 862/S — Ordre Général
No. 318

Officers, Non-commissioned Officers and Soldiers of the 28th Division

Shoulder to shoulder with your French comrades you were thrown into the counter-offensive battle which commenced on the 18th of July.

You rushed into the fight as though to a fête.

Your magnificent courage completely routed a surprised enemy and your indomitable tenacity checked the counter-attacks of his fresh divisions.

You have shown yourselves worthy sons of your Great Country and you were admired by your brothers in arms.

91 guns, 7,200 prisoners, immense booty, 10 kilometers of country reconquered; this is your portion of the spoil of this victory.

Furthermore, you have really felt your superiority over the barbarous enemy of the whole human race, against whom the children of Liberty are striving.

To attack him is to vanquish him.

American Comrades! I am grateful to you for the blood so generously spilled on the soil of my Country.

I am proud to have commanded you during such days and to have fought with you for the deliverance of the world. (Signed): Mangin.

VI Army (French) P. C. 9th August, 1918.

General Order

Before the great offensive of the 18th July, the American troops which were brigaded with the French VI Army distinguished themselves by taking from the enemy the Bois de la Brigade de Marine (Belleau Woods) and the town of Vaux, and stopping his offensive on the Marne and at Fossoy.

Afterwards they took a most glorious part in the second battle of the Marne, rivalling the French troops in attacking spirit and valor.

They have during twenty days of continuous fighting liberated numerous French villages, have made an advance of forty (40) kilometers over difficult terrain, and have succeeded in crossing the Vesle River.

Their valorous deeds are marked by names which will in the future glorify the military history of the United States of America:

Torcy, Belleau, Plateau D'Etrepilly, Épieds,
Le Charmel, L'Ourcq, Seringes-et-Nesles,
Sergy, La Vesle et Fismes.

The young divisions which entered the battle for the first time showed their possession of a dignity in keeping with the war traditions of the Regular Army. They have the same ardent will to defeat the Boche and the same discipline which guarantees that an order given by the Chief will always be executed whatever difficulties be encountered and whatever sacrifices have to be made.

The splendid results have been obtained by the energy and ability of the Chiefs and by the bravery of the soldiers.

I am proud to have had the command of such troops.

The General Commanding the VI Army
DEGOUTTE.

VI Army HEADQUARTERS, AUG. —, 1918.
38th Army Corps (French)

ORDRE

The time having now come for him to hand over the command of the zone of battle to GENERAL BULLARD, commanding the 3rd Corps, A. E. F., GENERAL DE MONDESIR, commanding the 38th French Corps, addresses all his thanks to the splendid troops of the 28th and 32nd American Divisions, who have proved during the pursuit, which is still being continued, not only their courage, but also their staying qualities.

The casualties, the toils and the hardships, due to the difficulty of bringing up rations during the marching and fighting of this period, were unable to break their high morale, their go and their warlike spirit.

GENERAL DE MONDESIR is proud to have had the opportunity to command them. He hopes that the day will come when he will have them next to him as comrades in our common fight.

(Signed) : L. DE MONDESIR,
General.
Commanding 38th Army Corps.

G. H. Q.

American Expeditionary Forces

General Orders) France, Aug. 28, 1918.
No. 143)

It fills me with pride to record in General Orders a tribute to the service and achievements of the First and Third Corps, comprising the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 26th, 28th, 32nd and 42nd Divisions of the American Expeditionary Forces.

You came to the battle-field at the crucial hour of the Allied cause. For almost four years the most formidable army the world has as yet seen had pressed its invasion of France, and stood threatening its capital. At no time had that army been more powerful or menacing than when, on July 15th, it struck again to destroy in one great battle the brave men opposed to it and to enforce its brutal will upon the world and civilization.

Three days later, in conjunction with our Allies, you counter-attacked. The Allied Armies gained a brilliant victory that marks the turning point of the war. You did more than give our brave Allies the support to which as a nation our faith was pledged. You proved that our altruism, our pacific spirit, our sense of justice have not blunted our virility or our courage. You have shown that American initiative and energy are as fit for the test of war as for the pursuits of peace. You have justly won the unstinted praise of our Allies and the eternal gratitude of our countrymen.

We have paid for our success in the lives of many of our brave comrades. We shall cherish their memory always, and claim for our history and literature their bravery, achievement and sacrifice.

This order will be read to all organizations at the first assembly formation after its receipt.

JOHN J. PERSHING,
General, Commander-in-Chief.

HEADQUARTERS 28TH DIVISION
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

GENERAL ORDERS) AUGUST 30TH, 1918.
No. 13)

The Division Commander is authorized to inform all, from the lowest to the highest, that their efforts are known and appreciated. A new division, by force of circumstances, took its place in the front line in one of the greatest battles of the greatest war of history. The division has acquitted itself in a creditable manner. It has stormed and taken a point that was regarded proof against assault. It has taken numerous prisoners from a vaunted Guards Division of the enemy. It has inflicted on the enemy far more loss than it has suffered from him. In a single gas application it inflicted more damage than the enemy inflicted on it by gas since its entry into the battle.

It is desired these facts be brought to the attention of

all, in order that the tendency of new troops to allow their minds to dwell on their own losses to the exclusion of what they have done to the enemy may be reduced to the minimum.

Let all be of good heart! We have inflicted more loss than we have suffered; we are better men individually than our enemies. A little more grit, a little more effort, a little more determination to keep our enemies down and the division will have the right to look upon itself as an organization of veterans.

(Signed): CHARLES H. MUIR,
Major-General.

ADVANCED HEADQUARTERS
FIRST ARMY CORPS

OCTOBER 8, 1918.

FROM: Commanding General, 1st Army Corps, U. S.
To: Commanding General, 28th Division.
SUBJECT: Commendation.

I desire to express to the 28th Division and its commander my appreciation of the splendid work done by the division on October 7, 1918.

The capture of Hill 244 and the combined advance of the right and left brigades bringing about the fall of the very strong positions of the enemy on the Chêne Tondu and the Taille l'Abbé demonstrate excellent leadership and first-class fighting ability.

The advance in exploitation in front of your right brigade resulting from the foregoing actions was a very bold procedure which will undoubtedly lead to even greater results.

(Signed) : H. LIGGETT,
Major-General, U. S. A.

HEADQUARTERS 28TH DIVISION
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

GENERAL ORDERS) FRANCE, OCTOBER 21, 1918.
No. 19)

1. The Division Commander desires to express the appreciation to all officers and soldiers of the 28th Division and of attached units, who, at all times during the advance in the Valley of the AIRE and in the ARGONNE FOREST, in spite of many hardships and constant personal danger, gave their best efforts to further the success of the division.

2. As a result of this operation, which extended from 5.30 on the morning of September 26th until the night of 8/9 October, with almost continuous fighting, the enemy's line was forced back more than ten kilometers. In spite of most stubborn and at times desperate resistance the enemy was driven out of GRAND BOUREUILLES; PETITE BOUREUILLES, VARENNES, MONTBLAINVILLE, APREMONT, PLEINCHAMP FARM, LA FORGE and CHÂTEL CHÉHERY, and the strongholds on Hills 223, 244 and LA CHÈNE TONDU were captured in the face of strong machine gun and artillery fire.

3. As a "new" division on the VESLE the 28th was cited in Orders from General Headquarters for its excellent service, and the splendid work just completed assures it a place in the very front ranks of the fighting "Red" Divisions. With such a position to maintain it is expected that every man will devote his best efforts to the work at hand—to hasten that final victory which is now so near.

By command of Major-General Muir:

W. C. SWEENEY,
Chief of Staff.

Official:

RICHARD W. WATSON,
Major-Adjutant.

G. H. Q.
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

GENERAL ORDERS) FRANCE, DEC. 19, 1918.
No. 232)

It is with a sense of gratitude for its splendid accomplishment, which will live through all history, that I record in General Orders a tribute to the victory of the First Army in the Meuse-Argonne battle.

Tested and strengthened by the reduction of the St. Mihiel salient, for more than six weeks you battered against the pivot of the enemy line on the western front. It was a position of imposing natural strength, stretching on both sides of the Meuse River from the bitterly contested hills of Verdun to the almost impenetrable forest

of the Argonne; a position, moreover, fortified by four years of labor designed to render it impregnable; a position held with the fullest resources of the enemy. That position you broke utterly, and thereby hastened the collapse of the enemy's military power.

Soldiers of all the divisions engaged under the First, Third and Fifth Corps—the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 7th, 26th, 28th, 29th, 32nd, 33rd, 35th, 37th, 42nd, 77th, 78th, 79th, 80th, 82nd, 89th, 90th and 91st—you will be long remembered for the stubborn persistence of your progress, your storming of obstinately defended machine gun nests, your penetration, yard by yard, of woods and ravines, your heroic resistance in the face of counter-attacks supported by powerful artillery fire. For more than a month, from the initial attack of September 26th, you fought your way slowly through the Argonne, through the woods and over hills west of the Meuse; you slowly enlarged your hold on the Côtes de Meuse to the east; and then, on the first of November, your attack forced the enemy into flight. Pressing his retreat, you cleared the entire left bank of the Meuse south of Sedan, and then stormed the heights on the right bank and drove him into the plain beyond.

Your achievement, which is scarcely to be equaled in American history, must remain a source of proud satisfaction to the troops who participated in the last campaign of the war. The American people will remember it as the realization of the hitherto potential strength of

the American contribution toward the cause to which they had sworn allegiance. There can be no greater reward for a soldier or for a soldier's memory.

This order will be read to all organizations at the first assembly formation after its receipt.

JOHN J. PERSHING,
General, Commander-in-Chief,
American Expeditionary Forces.

Official:
ROBERT C. DAVIS,
Adjutant General.

G. H. Q.
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

GENERAL ORDERS) FRANCE, NOVEMBER 13, 1918.
No. 204)

The following communications from the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies is published to the command:

GRAND GENERAL HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMIES
NOVEMBER 12, 1918.

OFFICERS, NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS, SOLDIERS OF THE ALLIED ARMIES:

After having stopped the advance of the enemy, you have, for months, with confidence and unrelenting energy, attacked him unceasingly.

You have won the greatest battle of history and saved the most sacred cause, the Freedom of the World.

Be proud!

You have decorated your standards with immortal glory.

Posterity will forever thank you.

Marshal of France,
Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies.
F. Foch.

By Command of General Pershing:
James W. McAndrew,
Chief of Staff.

Official:
Robert C. Davis,
Adjutant General.

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